COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"This is the bane, this is the curse of England, as relating to her foreign connections. Blessed with all sorts of resources necessary to the happiness and greatness of a nation, those resources, instead of remaining within herself, assume, through the intervention of commerce, a shape that deposits a considerable part of her wealth, and, along with it, the affections of no small number of the most opulent, active and intriguing of her people, in foreign countries; and, therefore it is, that her interests are made to give way to the interests of those countries, the case of nations being, in this respect, precisely the opposite of that of individuals; for, in the latter case, the debtor is, in a great degree, the slave of the creditor, whereas, in the former, the creditor is the slave of the debtor; and that, too, observe, exactly in proportion to the amount of the debt and the badness of character of the debtor."——REGISTER, *Vol. XII. page* 971.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

ORDERS IN COUNCIL.——As a last shift, in opposition to the Orders in Council, a petition has been presented to parliament by the "persons interested in the trade to the "United States of America." This petition was the consequence of a meeting of such persons, called by public advertisement, which meeting was held at the London Tavern, on the 10th instant, the same day on which the petition was presented to parliament; and, just as it ought to be, Mr. Alexander BARING was in the chair. When the vote came to be put, it was found, that there was a decided majority against the petition. This fact being stated in the House of Commons, it was asserted, on the other side, that the cause of such majority was this; that many persons not interested in the trade with the American States were present, and voted against the petition. These persons alledged, that they were interested; that they were West India merchants or planters, and, as such, could not but be deeply interested in whatever might affect our relations with the American States. This is undeniable, I think; or else what we have been so frequently told by the Americans and their advocates is false, namely, that it is from the American States only that our West India Islands can possibly receive a sufficiency of food and lumber. Surely men who have plantations in the West Indies, or having great trade with them, must, of all the persons in this country, be the most interested in whatever relates to war or peace with America. A Mr. Sharpe (one of the papers call him *Shanks)* having been amongst the persons present, who voted for the petition, was asked, in the House of Commons, on what he grounded his right to be a petitioner. His answer was, that he was concerned in one of the largest manufactories at Manchester, and, of course, was deeply interested in the trade with America, which was one of the greatest out-lets for his manufactures. Upon the same ground every one of his poor squallid weavers and spinners might have voted at the meeting; aye, every wretched soul, from whose labour he derives his income. Why might not Messrs. Cadell and Davies, Mr. Sheriff Phillips, and the rest of the booksellers, have voted, at the meeting, upon the same ground? Their books go to America; and, of course, the stoppage of that channel must diminish the sale of books. Nay, why should not I vote too, if I had chosen it? Many of my Registers and other publications, went to America; this out-let being cut off, I and my printers and booksellers and bookbinders and paper makers, and then again their rag and leather and ink sellers, and all the shoe-makers and taylors and barbers of us all, and all the butchers and bakers and millers and farmers employed in raising and preparing food for us; in short, all the whole nation is *interested* with me in the American trade, in the same way, though in a less degree than Mr. Sharpe, the Manchester manufacturer, is interested in that trade. The designation was a foolish one. It gave to every man in the country a right to attend the meeting and to vote upon the question; for, is it not absurd, that Mr. Baring, who is concerned in exporting goods to America, should put forward his claim to petition parliament upon measures relating to that country, and deny a similar claim, on the part of a journeyman, who earns his bread in the making of such goods?——It was stated in the House of Commons, and *not contradicted*, that many of those, who voted for the petition, were *American citizens*. They were perfectly right. No one can reasonably blame them for endeavouring to prevent the passing of a law, which will be injurious to their country, as long as their government shall persevere in its partiality for France. What I blame them for is

for assembling under the name of *Englishmen*. Blame them, indeed, I cannot say that I do much. It was one of those tricks so common in their native land, that they may well be excused. Change of climate cannot, all at once, change their natures. Mr. Baring is, I believe, a citizen in virtue of his *marriage*; and, I would wish to obtain from him, as chairman of the meeting, a direct answer to these questions: *are you owner, or part owner, of several American ships? To protect such ships from the hands of our enemy, must their papers express that the owners of both ship and cargo are American citizens? Do you belong to that partnership or family of Baring, who advanced to the American government the eleven millions of dollars to pay Napoleon for Louisiana, and who, of course, would lose both interest and principal, if that government become unable to pay?* Now, Sir, if you cannot with truth answer these questions in the negative, I do not blame you for petitioning against what will be injurious to America; bnt, I greatly blame you for pretending to be actuated by a desire to do good to the people of England. From your wife's relations, who are merchants and bankers and fundholders in America, you will, doubtless, receive all the praise which you merit at their hands; from your *fellow-citizens* at large you will also receive applause, and, I dare say, you thought of this while in the chair at the London Tavern, the whole of your conduct being calculated for transatlantic effect. But, from me and my countrymen you have no praise to expect. We have married no Americans; we own no American ships; we have made no advances to the American government; and, therefore, you must not expect us to enter into any of your sympathies. ——Similar to the connections and interests of Mr. Baring, are the connections and interests of thousands of persons in England; and, I have not the least doubt of the fact, that, of the petitioners, nine-tenths, if they were to make a correct account of their feelings and interests, would find the balance decidedly in favour of America. The Orders in Council, though, observe, were *not the cause* either of the *non-importation act or the embargo:* always bear this in mind. Always bear in mind, that these hostile acts were adopted previous to its being possible, that the Orders in Council could be known in America. Always bear in mind, that the former act was passed, with a view of compelling us to give up our maritime right of searching for seamen; and that the latter act was passed, because America could no longer carry on any trade with us, without setting France at defiance, rather than do which her rulers chose that she should have no trade at all. Always bear these facts in mind, when you are discussing the *consequences* of the Orders in Council; but, these Orders, though they did not, because they could not, produce the two hostile acts, may possibly, and some persons say they will, cause a war with America. If they do, they will cause great injury to those who have debts in that country, whether due from individuals or from the government. They will cause a total disturbance of the affairs of those, whose property is more in that country than in this; they will throw quite off their pivot all those, who, under the name of *American citizens*, have been carrying on a free trade with the enemy, and who have, when they could escape our cruizers, been conveying into his ports the materials for making vessels wherewith for him to invade and conquer us; these Orders in Council will, in the case contemplated, cut off the payment of the interest of money lent to the American government for the purpose of purchasing *from Buonaparté* a country which he had forced Spain to give to him. All this may be the effect of the Orders in Council; but, are the persons, who will thus be affected; are these the men, whose property ought to be watched over with *peculiar care* by the members of the English House of Commons? Are these the men, to the guarding of whose immediate interests the honour, the just vengeance, of England ought to give way?——The petition, is an application from men, who, though, for the greater part, they may, perhaps, be of English birth, ought not to be considered as Englishmen. It is, in reality, a petition from Americans by adoption and by interest; and it ought to be treated as a thing coming from the City of Washington, and not from the city of London; as a petition from "King Cong," conveyed through the mouths of his subjects. If "King Cong" himself chooses to petition, which he will do, before it be long, why, then, let us hear him; but, I have no notion of sparing the feelings of his haughty majesty, who never spared our feelings, and, if he will persist in making his people suffer rather than abandon his unjust partiality for France, suffer they should if I were minister of England, and of short duration should be the reign of "King Cong."——The petitioners state, as one of the evils of the Orders in Council, that the said Orders, if adhered to, will ruin the Americans. The words are these: "That the people of

America, even if they should remain at peace with us, must, by the want of a demand for their produce, and by the general distress our measures must occasion, be disabled from paying their debts to this country, which may fairly be estimated to amount to the enormous sum of twelve millions sterling."——The reader will do me the justice to remember, that I never went beyond this estimate. Indeed, this was the exact sum at which I stated the running debt; and I asked, what America was to do, if deprived of the use of such a credit. But, I was, in another instance, speaking of the evils of commerce; and I then spoke of this debt in the words which I have taken for my motto.——This argument of the petition is an excellent argument for the petitioners; that is to say, for persons, whose treasures are in America, and whose six per centum will vanish into air, upon a declaration of war; but, if it be a good argument as to this nation, in the present case, it must be good in all cases; and, then it becomes a settled point, that we must, by some means or other, so act as not to have war with America. No matter what she may require us to do, or to forbear to do. Do it or forbear to do it we must; or.... we lose twelve millions sterling. "But, gentlemen, do consider, you have had our goods and borrowed our money; and, though we quarrel about other matters, you should pay us honestly." No: and the more we reason the more insolent they become. Like BRASS, in the Confederacy, as they perceive our hesitation return, they repeat their threats. "Ah, well, I'll call a coach," says the swindler, BRASS; and, say the Americans, "twelve millions sterling, that's all." They make demands upon us; they arrogantly and insolently demand of England, without whose permission they dare not venture upon the seas; they demand of her that she shall yield to them, what she never yielded to any power in the world, the right of searching neutral vessels for her own seamen, which seamen, by means the most fraudulent and base, they have long been in the practice of inveigling away and detaining; this demand is rejected, and upon the ground of that rejection, they pass an act to prohibit the importation of certain English goods, for the express purpose of compelling England to submit to their demand; France issues a commercial decree, intended to deter America from having any communication with England; England retaliates; thereupon the Americans, who had before threatened to set in good earnest about the work of conquering the liberty of the seas, blockade themselves by an act of embargo. And now, behold, we are told, that, unless we retract our act of retaliation against France, the Americans, owing to their *distresses* (though, observe, the acts of non-importation and embargo *preceded* our Orders in Council), will not be able to pay the debts, which they owe to those Englishmen, who, for the sake of higher interest, and, as they thought, better security, preferred America to England as a place wherein to deposit their wealth. These men have now the impudence to tell us, that it is *we* who have occasioned the distresses of America, and to complain, in her name, of our injustice and cruelty, while the language they put into her mouth is, in substance, "yield "to my demands, submit to my open par- "tiality for your enemy, and to all the "insults I offer you, or I shall become, "from my measures of self-punishment in "order to punish you, too poor to pay the "debts which I have solemnly engaged to "pay you, whether we are at war or at "peace." What should you, reader, think of a tradesman, who, being in your debt, were to say to you, make me a surrender of your right to prevent me from inveigling away and corrupting and detaining your servants; who, upon being refused so insolent a demand, should lay by his tools, shut up his shop, and swear that he would, in order to injure you, do no more business, until his demand were assented to; and who, upon being asked for the amount of the debt due to you, were to plead his poverty, arising from the cessation of his trade? What would you think of such a man? America discovers, in this case, the insolence and baseness of the virago, who, in order to screen her carcase from the blows brought upon it by abuse too great for mortal endurance, thrusts forward her helpless bastard, with a "kill my innocent baby, you cruel villain, "do!" No: we do not wish to kill your baby creditors, whether peers, baronets, or simple commoners; but, we are resolved, or, I hope so, at least, that what you have been unable to bully us out of, we shall not yield to their jew-like supplications. Is this, ye gods, the lofty-spirited republic of America! Are these the sons of "St. Tammany," who would rather be thought the descendants of a copper-coloured savage than the sons and heirs of Englishmen! Is this the "new Amphyctionic Council!" Is this the great and renowned "King Cong!" Sending up under-hand petitions to the parliament of England, and resting, for a hope of impunity, upon the circumstance

that others, though innocent, would share in the punishment inflicted; procuring, as it were, a pregnancy before-hand, in order to escape, or at least to defer, the day of execution; and, therein, acknowledging to the world, that all their charges, against our justice and humanity, they themselves knew to be false! Well is it for us that the blood of the parent cannot be debased by that of the children.——There is a remedy for the "*distresses*" of the people of America, which, as the petitioners do not seem to have thought of it, I will take the liberty to point out. More than *three-fourths* of the trade of America, that trade, the loss of which so distresses her, is with England and her dominions. What is it that has put a stop to this trade? The non-importation act and the act of embargo. Well, then, why does she not *repeal those acts?* This is a thing to be accomplished in the space of three days. What an easy remedy and how natural! Aye, but there are our Orders in Council. Yes, but these Orders do not prevent a trade with England and her dominions. They prevent a trade with France, and America cannot trade with England, unless England allows her to trade with France. Very true. Nothing can be more fair and reasonable; and all, then, that America has to do, is to ask France whether she will repeal her blockading decree. If she does, all is open again; if not, all that America has left for it, is, to endeavour to *compel* France to repeal that decree; or, if she choose not to adopt that course, to continue to trade with England and her dominions.——This is so clear and so just, that every man of common sense must perceive the reasonableness of it, and every disinterested man must approve of it. But, the petitioners know, as well as I do, that the American government are disposed to sacrifice the interests of that country, that they are disposed to make the people suffer to the utmost extent of their endurance, rather than abandon their partiality for France, which partiality this same Mr. Jefferson and his abettors formerly professed to ground upon a *similarity in principles of government*, but which they adhere to with even encreased fervency, now that the government of France is become a military despotism, and now that her chiefs have declared, that republican government is the hot-bed of rascality ("*le foyer des scélérats*"), as may be seen by a reference to the report of Talleyrand preparatory to the last change of government in France. Mr. Alexander Baring (always ready to defend and justify the conduct of America) has, indeed, in his pamphlet, given another reason for this partiality. When France and England are at war, America, he says, having great maritime interests, and being, of course, desirous to prevent any power from obtaining a complete predominance at sea, will *naturally* throw her weight into the scale of France, as long as France is inferior to England, in point of maritime force. She will? She will naturally do this, will she? She will lay aside all other considerations, and keep steadily in view the preventing of England from maintaining a maritime predominance? This is her wise, natural and obvious line of policy, is it? It may be so, and it may become those who own American ships, who lend money to America, and who are, in fact as well as in form, American citizens, to applaud this policy in her government; but, I am sure it becomes not us Englishmen to listen to their advice; I am sure it becomes us not to trust them with the guardianship of either our money or our honour. Unless England had a decided predominance at sea, France, every man must see, would soon become her conqueror. Aye, says Mr. Baring, but what is that to America? I think it is a good deal to her; but, if she thinks otherwise, I am sure it is a very good reason for our not listening to the councils of those who have her interests at heart more than they can be supposed to have the interest of England at heart. ——Mr. Grattan, in the debate of the 11th instant, after having gone over the old arguments (with a due share of amplification), with respect to the commercial consequences of the Orders in Council, as bearing upon America, is reported to have added something touching the great political consequences of the same measure. The passage, as reported in the Morning Chronicle, is this: "An American war, however, appeared to the right honourable gentleman to be much more dangerous on other grounds than any that could arise out of mere commercial considerations. He called upon the British parliament to consider the consequences of *separating* Great Britain and America, and thus *dividing* and *weakening* the only force that remained in the world to sustain the character of liberty—to *hold out hopes to the Continent*. The right honourable gentleman enforced this appeal in a strain of peculiarly interesting and impressive eloquence—and concluded with exhorting gentlemen to reflect, that any loss to America or England, would but *add to the accumulated gains of France*—would but advance the strength of that power which was equally the enemy of both."——The eloquence of

Mr. Grattan might be, for any thing I know to the contrary, "peculiarly interesting and impressive;" but the reasoning appears to me to have been worth very little indeed. Upon the reading of this passage, who would not suppose, that the speaker had thought himself carried back to the year 1775? "*Separating* Great Britain and America!" Why Mr. Baring (who knows much more of the disposition of America than Mr. Grattan ever knew), tells us, in justification of America, that it is *naturally* her policy to throw her weight into the scale of "France," until England is deprived of her maritime superiority; that is to say, in plain words, until England be upon the eve of subjugation. That the American Government views the matter in the same light that Mr. Baring does is evident from its conduct; from its notorious and flagrant partiality to France; from its officers, civil and military, in all its sea-port towns, giving open encouragement to the inveigling away of our seamen; from the pertinacity which it has shown with respect to its demand upon us to give up our right of searching for seamen, a demand which could have no important motive, other than that of enfeebling of our naval force, and a demand, too, which, in all probability, was made, if not at the instigation, at least with the decided approbation of France. To compel us to submit to this demand an act of congress has been passed, while which act existed the late ministers had the meanness to treat with America, and they have since blamed the present ministry for not resuming the negotiation upon the same basis. From all this, from the publications, tolerated by the government of America, inviting our seamen to desert, and proposing public subscriptions to reward them for so doing; from the thousands of instances of American envy and hatred of England; from the multitude of proofs that no concessions on our part are capable of abating this implacable hostility: from all this, it abundantly appears, that Mr. Baring is better acquainted with the policy of America than Mr. Grattan is, and that to express alarm at the idea of "*separating* Great Britain from America," would, if it had come from any one but a member of parliament, merit an epithet, which, from the deep sense of respect which I bear towards the honourable house, I shall here forbear to apply.——Mr. Grattan appears to be surprisingly affected, at the idea of "*dividing* and *weakening* the only force" (the force of Great Britain and America) that remains in the world to sustain the character of liberty, and *to hold out hopes to the continent of Europe.*" But, before Mr. Grattan had given way to his feelings of sorrow upon this score, and especially before he had made an attempt to communicate them to his honourable fellow lawgivers, it might have been worth his while to ascertain the point, how, in what way, the force of Great Britain and America can now be said to be *united*; because, unless two things can, with propriety, be said to be joined together, it appears to me to be pretty nearly, if not quite, nonsense, to talk of dividing them. Did Mr. Grattan mean, that the two nations were, though not directly, yet indirectly, in co-operation? The fact is notoriously the reverse, as has been before shown; and, does he think, that, from the former state of things, when Americans carried on the trade for France between her and her colonies and her dependent states; when Americans made sham purchases of French merchant ships and so prevented the loss of the use of those ships to France; when Americans were frequently detected in evading our blockades of French ports, and in conveying to our enemy naval and military stores, when Americans were seen, in the ports of France, and (the moment Russia became our enemy) in the ports of Russia, toasting the perpetuity of the union between our enemies and America, and "success to their efforts against the tyrants of the seas:" does Mr. Grattan think, that, from this state of things, from this line of conduct, on the part of America, the oppressed part of the continent of Europe could entertain a hope of deliverance? Does he think that America here acted the part of endeavouring to "sustain the character of liberty in the "world?"——No, sir, that which is "lost "by America is *not* gained by France." If America loses by her being blockaded, if she cease to send out her ships, France loses too, because she is thereby cut off from all communication with her colonies, which colonies must go to rapid decay. America loses by being prohibited from fraudulently covering French ships and cargoes with her flag; but does not France lose by the same prohibition? America loses, in short, by every measure that prohibits, or restricts, her commerce with France and her allies; but, France and her allies lose in a much greater degree. It is not true, then, that what is lost by America is gained by France: they were, and they are, in every thing, except in open arms, united; and, as far as relates to matters of commerce, the loss of the one, in the way we are speaking of, is the loss of the other.——No, Sir; no, Mr. Grattan, the way to convert America from her obsti-

nate, foolish and base partiality to France, is not that of concession and forbearance. We have tried fifteen years of concessions (see Register, Vol. XII. page 961 and the following;) we have shown forbearance, such as was never before shown by any nation in the world, which had the power to resent injuries and insults; and, the consequence has been, new demands, fresh injuries and fresh insults. I beg the reader to refer to Vol. XII. page 961. The facts there stated cannot be denied, and, with those facts before us, shall we make new concessions? and shall we exercise still further forbearance? The late ministers attempted it. The president sent his envoys to negociate with us upon several points; and, in order to give effect to his demands, he procured an act of non-importation to be passed, ready to be put in execution against us, if those demands were refused. Our late ministers were such ..... I dare not say what they were for submitting to treat under such circumstances, and I will not wrong my indignation by an inadequate phrase. They submitted to treat; they who talked so much about national honour, and the dignity of their Royal Master, submitted to treat in his name, with the threat of "Tho- "mas Jefferson" hanging over his head. They did not *stipulate* away our right of search; but, they reserved the point for future discussion, and they did pledge their "Royal Master" to do *something more*, with respect to the right of search, than to take care that there should be no abuse in the *exercise* of it. What more they would have done we were, happily, prevented from knowing, by their dismission from office. But "Tho- "mas Jefferson," was not to be put off by vague promises. He saw our allies fast falling before Napoleon, upon the continent of Europe, and, by way, I suppose, of illustrating Mr. Grattan's doctrine of *union* between England and America, in opposition to France, he seized upon that moment of our alarm, as he imagined, to send back the treaty unratified, and to point out the alterations and additions, that he insisted upon being introduced, just, as has been before observed, as a beseiging general sends back an offer of capitulation. But, as his adverse fate would have it, the commanders of the garrison had, in the mean time, been changed; and, the new ones, whatever other faults they might have (and those were not either few in number or trifling in magnitude), they had not that of foolish fondness for President Jefferson and his frenchified faction, nor were they so basely complaisant to the impudent clubs of commerce, as to be ready to sacrifice the honour of the nation at the shrine of such despicable interests. The rejected treaty, the returned articles of capitulation, were received with an assurance given to the American minister here, that the negociation should not be *resumed*, and that no new negociation should be begun upon the same basis; for which manly conduct the present ministers have been censured by Lord Grenville, censure, however, which they will, I dare say, make shift to survive.——Here ended, I hope, the long chapter of concessions and forbearance to America; a nation that has repaid every new benefit with a new injury, every new act of kindness with a new insult, every caress with a kick and every blessing with a curse.

"Tender-handed press a nettle,
And it stings you for your pains;
Press it, like a man of mettle,
And it soft as silk remains.

'Tis the same with vulgar natures,
Use them kindly, they rebel;
But, be rough as nutmeg-graters,
And the rogues obey you well."

The truth of this maxim, which I applied to the Americans when we were face to face, has been strikingly verified by them. Under the English government, which towards *them*, at least, was mild in the extreme, they showed an uncommon jealousy of all authority; they resented every thing, which could be possibly construed into an attempt upon their liberties. Their present rulers knew them well, and knowing them, they scruple not to give them the nutmeg-grater pretty freely. Their governors and judges do things, with perfect impunity, that would raise an open rebellion in England, even at this day. It is a notorious fact, that a man, imprisoned for an assault upon his wife, was forgotten in one of their prison cells, and when the keeper recollected him, was found dead, and *half-devoured by the rats*. Yet, no stir did this make. There was no public proceeding of any sort instituted. Another man was sent to prison, upon suspicion of robbing the bank. He was committed by one of the bankers. The real criminal was soon found out. Yet was the first man, *without any oath made against him*, kept in jail for a long while, and amongst felons too, upon the ground, that he had been employed about the locks of the bank, and was, therefore, *a dangerous man*. A man who had been charged with a libel upon Jefferson, died in jail, in Virginia, committed by a justice of the peace, because he could not *find bail to keep the peace and be of good behaviour*, and this, observe,

previous to conviction. The bail demanded was greater than it could reasonably be expected that the man should obtain; though their constitution expressly enjoins, that excessive bail shall, in no case, be demanded. The tyrannical acts of the Oligarchy which now reigns in America, under the name and form of a republican government, are not to be described in a small compass. The rulers are, for the greater part, lawyers, and lawyers, too, observe, very different indeed from the lawyers in England, taken in general. A set of men, who unite, without exception, the profession of the attorney with that of the barrister; who have no sort of shame in asking for a job, and in under bidding one another; who are versed in all the arts of chicanery and fraud; and, who, when they arrive at stations of great power and influence, exercise, under the name of law and justice, oppression such as despotism never dreamt of, to all which the people submit like spaniels, while they have, at the same time, the front to invite *our sailors* to "partake "of their liberty and happiness," thus exhibiting to the world a striking instance of that harmony, which is always found to subsist between the sister vices, baseness and insolence.——In the conduct of the nation towards France, on the one hand, and towards England, on the other, we perceive all the marks of the same disposition. There is scarcely any one sort of wrong, which they have not reoeived at the hands of France. They have had their property siezed; they have been captured at sea; their ships have been shot at, afterwards boarded, and made to pay so much for each shot fired at them; they have been detained in the French colonies; their property has been taken, by order of the French commanders in the West-Indies, and paid for in bills upon France, which have been refused payment; their government, even Washington, has been nosed and threatened by the French envoy; they have discovered that envoy treating with their Secretary of State for a bribe; they, in the intercepted dispatches of the French envoy, find themselves described as the most corrupt and villainous people upon earth; some scores of them have been taken and flogged by the French; in short, they have been kicked and cuffed and buffeted and spit upon, till the French appear to have been wearied with the exercise. And yet, the consequence, as we see, is a decided, and even a growing partiality for France, while a precisely opposite conduct towards them, on the part of England, has inspired them, as towards her, with a spirit of aggression and of insolence.—— Such a nation, Mr. Grattan, is not to be won by concession, mildness, and forbearance; and, be you assured, Sir, that if we are to remain at peace with America, which, upon proper terms, I desire full as much as you (and have, I am pretty certain, greater personal reasons for desiring it), we shall have to thank the naval and military force, now assembled and assembling at Bermuda. It is in vain to disguise this fact, It is foolish to fear that we shall produce irritation by openly avowing our opinions. We have to deal with a nation by no means delicate, and who, in short, are to be induced to act justly and moderately by nothing but force.—— Mr. PONSONBY, in the report of the debate of the 10th instant, is represented as having ridiculed the idea of reducing Napoleon to reasonable terms of peace, by the means of the regulations laid down in the Orders of Council, and to have asked in a most triumphant tone: "Did "the destruction of Lyons, the first silk "manufacturing town in France, produce "any serious effect upon the resources of "that country? Was the loss of St. Do-"mingo, the finest colony in the world, "of such serious consequences to the in-"terests of France?" I answer both questions in the negative. Why, this is my own doctrine, Mr. Ponsonby; for, have I not, when the resources arising from foreign trade have been talked of, said, "look at "France, who has become strong and great "in proportion as she has become less com-"mercial." This was a most powerful argument; but, then, it was directly at war with the petition of the Sharpes and the Barings, and with all the long speeches (good God how long!) intended to show, that the Orders in Council, if persevered in, would prove the overthrow of Manchester and Birmingham, and would thereby greatly injure the country, diminish its resources, enfeeble it, and pave the way for its subjugation. Yes, Sir, this argnment of yours was a complete answer to the speeches of your commercial friends, particularly Lord Henry Petty; also to the pamphlets of Messrs. Baring and Roscoe. These gentlemen all vehemently contend, that commerce is the life-blood of the nation; and that, as the Orders of Council will diminish, and nearly, destroy, commerce, these Orders will, of course, be the ruin of the nation. But you, to whose department it fell to shew that the Orders would, by diminishing the commerce of the enemy, do him no harm, laugh at the idea of a nation being injured by the diminution or

destruction of its trade and commerce. There was, I must confess, a great difficulty to overcome. It was the business of the whole faction to make the people believe, if they could, that this measure of their opponents was injurious to England, and not at all injurious to France. It was not easy to do this amongst men of impartiality and plain sense; because, it was alledged by you, that the measure would diminish the commerce of England, and we all knew that it would go near to produce the utter annihilation of all the remaining commerce in France. The effect in both countries was of precisely the same nature; the difference was only in the degree; and, as it was evident, that whatever might be the amount of the evil in England, it would be surpassed by the amount of the evil in France, the balance, it was equally evident, was in our favour. Such being the case, the course which, I think, wisdom pointed out, was, to make the most of the evils which England would experience from the measure, and to say not a word about its operation with respect to France. But, this is what a faction, in or out of place, never yet did. They never yet contented themselves with what told in their favour. They must always have more. Every thing which they oppose must be black and white alternately, as it may suit their purpose so to consider it.——After all, however, Mr. Ponsonby appears to view the Orders of Council in a light very different from that, in which they are regarded by me. It is evident, that the measure will produce great distress in France and in all her dependent states, and the consequences of this distress cannot but be favourable to us. But, the light in which I love to look at it, is that of a declaration, issued in the face of the world, that England is resolved to command the sea, and that no nation shall navigate upon it without her permission, or without exposing themselves to punishment at her hands. It was high time to do something of this sort, unless we chose to sink quietly under the domination of France. No man supposes, that Napoleon will be induced to listen to equitable terms of peace, merely because his commerce is totally ruined; but, if, by this maritime measure, we convince him that we are resolutely bent upon exercising exclusive dominion upon the sea as long as he continues to exercise such dominion upon the land, he will be disposed, if any thing can dispose him, to enter upon negociations for peace upon terms compatible with our honour and our safety. It is, I allow it, a calamity, that the civilized world should be divided between two great master states, all the others being, more or less closely, dependent upon their will; but, this is a calamity now not to be removed by us. Our enemy may remove it whensoever he pleases; we are ready to give up the rigid exercise of our power by sea; but this we cannot do, while he holds all the land in subjection.——America, if she were disposed to act justly and wisely, might soon put an end to the contest. By uniting in the war with us; by securing to our colonies an ample supply of provisions and lumber; by putting every one at ease with respect to manufactures and commerce, and by leaving France and her dependent states no hope of embarrassing us by a continuation of the war; by these means, she would obtain the glory of giving peace to the world. But these are means, which she will never employ, 'till necessity shall compel her to shake off the rancourous faction, under which she is now sinking from disgrace to disgrace. Mr. Davies, one of the most able and most worthy men in America, has observed, in his excellent work upon geography, lately published in Philadelphia, that "the nations of Europe cannot view with "indifference a nation of transatlantic tra-"ders that discover no sympathy in the con-"vulsions of a whole continent, no anxiety "about the sufferings of other nations, as "long as those sufferings open new chan-"nels of commerce, and swell the revenues "of the state." Certainly, the nations of Europe cannot view such a people with indifference. Mr. Davies has given a just picture of his nation, and a most unamiable one it is. One great reason, that the partiality to France (at all times evinced by the rulers of America) is viewed with approbation by the people, good as well as bad, is this; that France being an *irritable* power, there is more danger of a disturbance of commerce from any offence given to her than from an offence given to England. As if they said: "England we know will not interrupt us, "do what we will. All, therefore, that "we have to do, is to keep well with "France." This is the principle, by which the very best of the public men in America have been, all along, actuated. It is time, therefore, that we convince them, that, though not so ready to discover irritation as France is, we are not made of such lumpish materials as to be affected by no injury or insult that ingenious malice can invent; and, when they discover, that we are not disposed to brook that which they would not attempt towards France, they may, perhaps, in making up the account, find the balance of danger on the side opposite to that, on which they have hitherto thought it to rest,

and may be disposed to treat us as well, at least, as they treat our enemy.——As things now stand, America must *begin* the work of reconciliation. I have always said, that it was for the ministers to consider how far they might relax, with regard to America, in the exercise of our maritime dominion. But, America is the aggressor; she passed her non-importation act two years ago. The first step, the very first step, therefore, is the repeal of that act. That being done, we may, with propriety, and without loss of character, negociate with her, as to a relaxation of the rules laid down in the Orders of Council; but, until she take that step, it is for us to remain immoveable in our present position.

ARMY.——The Mutiny Bill has passed the House of Commons, and with the clause spoken of in my last. Thus has the measure of Mr. Windham, decidedly the best that ever was adopted with respect to the army, been, upon only a few days notice, rendered null and void. The votes for the clause were 189, against 116, a greater minority than the ministers had before met with. Out of doors, the measure has excited great general disgust, but not greater than it merits; and, it is to be hoped, that, first or last, the authors of it will meet with their just reward. ——Upon this third reading of the mutiny bill, Sir Francis Burdett moved to introduce the following clause: "that no officer in the "army should be dismissed or deprived of "his pay, otherwise than by the sentence "of a court-martial, or by address of either "House of Parliament."——This being a question of vital importance to the remaining liberties of the country, I shall here insert the short sketch of the debate, as it is given in the newspapers, referring the reader, for a more full report, to the Parliamentary Debates.

"*Sir F. Burdett*, pursuant to the notice given for him a few days since by a noble friend of his (Lord Folkestone) had to offer a clause, to prevent officers from being dismissed from the army by any other means than the sentence of a Court Martial. He thought such a provision of essential importance to the army, to the interests of the crown, and those of the country. The form of the proposition he had to make was so moderate, that he did not conceive any objection could be made to it. He was not aware of any opposition being intended, except from some loose ideas that had been thrown out, of its trenching on the Prerogative. He did not think it did. But even if it were true that it did, he should not think that would be a reasonable objection with the house, if he could shew that the power, so far as he meant to correct it, had been exercised in a manner detrimental to the honour of the crown and the interests of the army and of the country. The army itself was constitutionally looked upon as a great infringement made by the crown on the prerogatives of the people. He did not say it was an unnecessary infringement. But as the army was constitutionally an invasion of the liberties of the people, the principle of limiting in some respects the arbitrary power of the crown, with respect to the army, could not be looked upon as trenching on the prerogative of the crown, which held the army only by the indulgence of parliament. He contended that no prerogative of the crown, ought to infringe on the liberties of the people. The clause he should propose had nothing in view but to secure that justice and fair dealing which should always mark the proceedings of the crown towards the people. He proposed to restrain only that which no king if well advised, would ever do. It was due to the officers of the army, to afford them that legal protection for their fortunes and lives, and what was of still more importance to them, their characters, which persons of other classes enjoyed. They were now wholly at the mercy of those malicious whispers, by which the ears of persons high in authority, were ever liable to be abused. Officers of the army should certainly be no worse situated in this respect than the rest of his majesty's subjects. No man whatsoever ought to be condemned or punished without a hearing. Such was the principle of British justice. The honour of which military men were so tenacious, was exposed to ruin often without the possibility of guarding against it. The discipline of the army also suffered materially by the practice he wished to correct. For when those who, if brought to trial, would be found decidedly deserving of punishment, were blended in the operation of one undistinguishing stroke of power with those who, if tried, had the means of procuring themselves an honourable acquittal, virtue and good conduct, in a great measure, lost their stimulus, and bad conduct was sheltered from a great part of that shame, which was the most effectual check upon its vicious progress. As the object he had in view was to prevent future abuse rather than to censure the past, he forbore to cast any reflection or to cite any of those cases which it would be competent to adduce. He might be told these were cases in which persons were dismissed, whom it would be hard to expose by a court martial, though it would have been highly improper to continue them in the service. Persons of this kind might be permitted to resign, and thus there would

always be a sufficient security against abuse of every kind. It was the principle of the British constitution to separate every thing odious from the crown, and to adorn it with the heavenly attributes of mercy and the power of relief. It was an inconsistency with this principle that he wished to remove, by giving to the officers of the army the same measure of justice enjoyed by the rest of the community. It was by the army that the crown was supported and the people protected, and why should the army be in a worse situation than any other part of the people in the essential point of justice? The army had now grown to such an extent, with a disposition still further to augment it, that even in point of mere numerical consideration, it was a large portion of the people. And in the present critical and dangerous situation of the country, when our safety depended so much on the zeal and energy of the officers of the army, ought they to be left in circumstances in which they might be whispered out of their rank and situation, into poverty, disgrace, and ruin, and a thousand calamities worse than any law could inflict, by the arts of a dark malignant assassin, who would not dare to meet them in the open light of genuine British justice? Courts martial afforded ample means to punish every description of offence, and when it was considered that these courts were not like juries, bound to be unanimous in their sentence, and how many descriptions of offences could be included under the very extensive and sweeping charge of ungentleman-like conduct, so often censured and punished by them, he was sure no latitude of impunity could be apprehended, by giving every accused person the opportunity of stating his case before such a tribunal. He moved a clause accordingly."

"*The Secretary at War* complimented the honourable baronet on the *moderation* which he had displayed; but objected to the clause because he had laid no grouud for it. He urged the bad consequences of changes in the military system without the strongest reasons for it; and the necessity that the army should be dependent on the crown. It was so necessary that even if it were not the the case at present, he should have proposed it now for the first time. He would wish, if it were possible, that the military should have the advantage of the common law; but it was inconsistent with the constitution and discipline of the army. The history of the world proved the necessity of strict discipline in an army, and for this it must look it a head. The instances in which the power alluded to had been exercised were of late extremely rare; but the best effects resulted from the existence of the power. Every part of the prerogative pushed to extremes would produce abuses—such as in the making of peace or war. But this was no reason for diminishing that prerogative. An army independent of the sovereign was contrary to common sense. Such an encroachment on the prerogative would subvert the constitution. He allowed that in former times officers had been deprived of their regiments for voting against ministers. But there were no instances of this abuse in modern times. He therefore gave his decided negative to the proposition."

"*Lord Folkestone* adverted to the extraordinary manner in which the honourable secretary had answered the arguments of the honourable baronet on his side. He had complimented him first for not stating past abuses, and then objected to the clause, because no grounds had been laid for it. The honourable secretary very well knew that there were instances of the most cruel oppression that might be stated. But the honourable baronet below only looked to the future, and had laid irrestible grounds for his proposition. He had stated his object to be to protect the officers and the crown itself from doing what was known to have been done, and from the secret whispers of slander and malice. His lordship, however, expressed his hope, that the honourable baronet would withdraw his clause, and bring the subject forward in a separate bill, for so grave and important a matter required the most serious deliberation and the fullest discussion. The honourable baronet he allowed could not, however, be liable to the charge of precipitation from the other side. The noble lord opposite had brought forward his clause in a manner equally sudden; and as the houourable secretary had expressed so strongly his aversion to changes, he, no doubt, would give his vote against the change proposed by the noble lord near him. He earnestly requested the honourable baronet to withdraw his clause for the present, as he should regret extremely to be obliged to give it his negative."

"*Colonel Duckett* opposed the clause, on account that it would be making the army judges in its own cause; and also, as it proposed to refuse, for the first time, the placing confidence in the crown, when we had a sovereign who of all others had best deserved it."

"*General Fitzpatrick* said, that when he

had proposed any change in the constitution of the army, he had always stated reasons which appeared to him to make it a matter of necessity. The military laws were naturally regarded in that house with a strong prejudice; and those who were particularly attached to the principles of the constitution, applied arguments to these laws which were not at all suited to the nature of the case. They were a necessary evil, and ought not to be interfered with. The honourable baronet had been complimented for his moderation, in not going into past abuses; but he was bound to make out the strongest case before a change of this kind could be for a moment contemplated. The proposition, therefore, had his decided negative."

The motion was withdrawn, in order to be brought forward again in a separate bill. I have long wished to see this question brought before parliament. I wanted to hear what they would say to it; and particularly what the *Wigs* would say, those fine old boys, those "champions of our rights," as a correspondent in my last (whom I shall answer in my next) calls them. General Fitzpatrick spoke for the whole, I suppose; and now, I should think, that the friends of Sir Francis Burdett may set their minds at rest as to the *support* that he is to receive from the Whigs. I have before observed upon the alteration, which the increased state of the army has made in regard to the prerogative in question. When the whole of the peace establishment was not above ten thousand men, there was no danger in the prerogative; but, now, when the number of *commissioned officers* is more than ten thousand; when one can scarcely walk a hundred yards, in any street of any town, without rubbing against an officer of the army; when no small part of the members of both houses of parliament are officers of the army; and when there is scarcely a family of any note in the whole kingdom that has not some relation an officer in the army, surely such a prerogative must be very dangerous. England is now *a military country*; it is so professed to be by the ministry and the parliament; and, if this be so, and if the king has the absolute power of dispossessing, at his pleasure, and without reason assigned, every officer of the army of his means of existence as well as of his character, of what *sort*, I ask, is the government of England?—Colonel Duckett's observation, that the proposition refused to place confidence in "a sovereign, who, of "all others best deserved it," was, to be sure, of great weight. Yes, without doubt, no sovereign ever deserved confidence so well as his Majesty. That is a settled point. But, the worst of it is, that there will always be men to say the same thing of every future sovereign, as there have been to say it of the past. Pope has a passage, the words of which I forget, but the substance of which is, that the character whom he is describing, always thought the king of the time being the best; and, when one king died, could scarce be vext, so wise and gracious was the next. But, the qualities of the king had nothing at all to do with the matter. Sir Francis Burdett professed to wish for nothing more than to guard the officers of the army *for the future*; and, surely, to leave the fortunes, the character, and the happiness of so considerable a part of the nation at the sole mercy of the military adviser of the king is not very agreeable to the spirit of those laws, which make up what is called the constitution of England. I earnestly hope, that this subject will undergo an ample discussion. It is of infinitely greater importance to *the people of England*, than all the questions about commerce and the law of natiens, which have cost the honourable members so many hard nights' work during the present session, and which have caused the printing of more papers than any man living could read in a year, though he went over them with the volubility of a law-stationer's clerk.

Portuguese Merchants.——I lose not a moment in endeavouring to put the public upon its guard against an attempt, which, according to a paragraph in the Courier, of the 15th instant, this description of persons are preparing to make upon the taxes. It is there stated, that they have had a meeting at the London Tavern, and have appointed a committee to wait upon the Secretary of State, in order to obtain indemnification for their losses, in their precipitate flight from Lisbon.——This is intolerable. What! are we to be taxed to pay for the losses, which they have incurred in trade? Do we suffer a bookseller, or a printer, to come to us for losses, which he may have sustained by fire? As well might we indemnify the farmer for his losses by the sheep-rot or the turnip-fly.——Why did they not *insure?* If they could not do that, why did they not come away sooner? They had plenty of notice.——In short, this is as impudent as the application of the adventurers to Buenos Ayres, and worse of it cannot be said.—— Upon one condition I would grant them indemnification. I would make each individual give an account of his profits, since he began trade with Portugal. Those profits

he should then pay into the exchequer. I would then give him as much as he could have earned, in the capacity of a labouring man, from the time he began to trade with Portugal until the present time, deducting the sum necessary for his support as a labouring man, during that space. If he had made no profits, I would advance him out of the taxes, the amount of 12 shillings a week for a year, or, which would be much better, perhaps, send him, at once, to the parish, if he were unable to work.——What insufferable, what outrageous impudence! A set of men leave their own country, go to another to carry on a lucrative trade, continue in that trade for years, and, at last, when they can stay no longer, when they can derive no longer any profits from a trade, for the support of which their country has dearly paid in armaments and subsidies, home they come and demand *indemnification* for the loss they have sustained, in consequence of having remained to the last moment!

The *American Merchant*, whose letter came too late to be noticed, without great inconvenience, shall see his letter and my answer, in the next number. In the mean while, I think, he will regard it but fair to give me his *name*, in consequence of the base imputation contained in the last paragraph of his letter.——Whether he send his name or not, however, his letter shall be inserted.

Botley, 17th. March, 1808.

COBBETT'S
Parliamentary Debates.

The Third number of Vol. X. is ready for delivery. Complete sets from the commencement in the year 1803, may be had of R. Bagshaw, Brydges Street, Covent-Garden, and of J. Budd, Pall Mall.

*** All Communications for the above Work, if sent to the Publishers in due time, will be carefully attended to.

AMERICAN MERCHANTS' PETITION.

Dated 10th March, 1808.—The petition of the undersigned merchants, manufacturers and others, of the city of London, interested in the trade with the United States of America, humbly sheweth:—That your petitioners contemplate with the greatest anxiety and apprehension the alarming consequences with which they are threatened from certain orders in council, purporting to be issued "for the protection of the *trade and navigation* of Great Britain; *but on which*, they are induced, after mature consideration, to believe that they must be productive of the most ruinous effects. Your petitioners are duly sensible of the necessity of making every sacrifice of personal interests, to promote the strength and resources of the country in the present extraordinary crisis of public affairs; and if the total change introduced into the whole commercial system of this country, and of the world, by the orders of council, could be conducive to so desirable an object; your petitioners, great as their losses must be, would submit without a murmur; but understanding that these orders are principally, if not wholly, recommended by an opinion, that they will prove beneficial to the commercial interests of this country, they feel it to be their duty, humbly to represent their conviction, that this opinion is founded in error; and that if the prayer of their petition be granted, they shall be able to prove, that they must be productive of the most fatal consequences to the interests, not only of your petitioners, but of the commerce and manufactures of the empire at large.—Your petitioners will abstain from enforcing, by any details, their apprehension, that these measures are likely to interrupt our peace with the United States of America; our intercourse with which, at all times valuable, is infinitely more so since we are excluded from the continent of Europe. To this only remaining branch of our foreign intercourse, we must now look for a demand for our manufactures, for many of the most important materials for their support; and for supplies of provisions and naval stores, necessary for our subsistence and defence.—Your petitioners feel assured that they will be able to prove to the satisfaction of your hon. house, that the neutrality of America has been the means of circulating to a large amount, articles of the produce and manufactures of this country, in the dominions of our numerous enemies, to which we have no direct access.—That the annual value of British manufactures exported to the United States, exceeds ten millions sterling.: and—that as our consumption of the produce of that country falls far short of that amount, the only means of paying us must arise from the consumption of the produce of America in other countries, which the operation of the orders in council must interrupt, and in most instances totally destroy.—That the people of America, even if they remain at peace with us, must by a want of demand for their produce, and by the general distress our measures must occasion, be disabled from paying their debts to this country, which may fairly be estimated to amount to the

enormous sum of 12 millions sterling :—That the neutrality of America, so far from being injurious to the other commercial interests of Great Britain, has promoted materially their prosperity :—That the produce of our colonies in the West Indies, of our empire in the East, and of our fisheries on the banks of Newfoundland, has frequently found a foreign market by this means ; and —That by the destruction of the neutrality of the only remaining neutral state, all possibility of intercourse with the rest of the world being removed, trade cannot possibly be benefited, but must necessarily be annihilated.—Your petitioners feeling as they do most sensibly with their fellow subjects, the pressure of a war in which their commerce has principally been aimed at by the enemy, would scorn to plead their distress in recommendation of measures inconsistent with the honour and substantial interests of their country ; but they humbly rely upon the wisdom of the legislature that this distress shall not be increased by our own errors, and they confidently believe, that, if they are permitted to illustrate by evidence the facts they are here to state, and to explain many others which they shall here refrain from enumerating, they cannot fail to establish the conviction with which they are so strongly impressed ;—That the orders of council are founded on the most mistaken opinions of the commercial interests of the empire, and must be particularly fatal to those of your petitioners.—Your petitioners therefore pray, that they may be heard by themselves or council at the bar of this hon. house, and be permitted to produce evidence in support of the allegations of their petition ; or that this hon. house will examine into the nature and extent of their grievances in any mode which may appear advisable, with a view of affording such relief as this hon. house in its wisdom may think proper.—And your petitioners will ever pray.

CLAIMANTS ON AMERICA.

SIR,——An aspersion upon the character of the merchants having Claims under the Convention with America, which appeared in the Morning Post of the 11th of Feb. in the Report of a Speech which that paper has given as the Speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, renders it necessary that the public should be undeceived, and which I shall attempt, as well as endeavour to do justice to myself, in common with my brother claimants, notwithstanding my increased age and infirmities, since I last addressed some observations to you on the subject of the Board of Claims on American Debtors (Vol. X. p. 149, 297). I am doubtful whether to attribute this reported Speech to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or to the errors of the reporter, but which soever it may be, the tendency of the passage I shall notice is a fit subject for reprehension, whether we consider the charge against the Board of Commissioners, or the false statement respecting the conduct of the merchants.—The observations to which I refer, as reported in the Morning Post of the 11th of Feb , arose out of the subject of the arrangement with the Bank, and are as follows : " But the Com-
" mittee was in error in including in this
" £475,000 part of £600,000 placed in
" the Bank, in virtue of an arrangement
" with the United States of America.
" Though the claimants on this fund may
" *not have been as prompt in coming for-*
" *ward with demands as before,* it was in
" the *power of the trustees to vest the money*
" *in Exchequer Bills,* for the benefit of the
" claimants, whenever they should come
" forward."—It will be necessary, Mr. Cobbett, that I trace the origin of the Claim we have, not upon the Board of Commissioners alone, but upon the nation, to repel this attack upon our want of promptitude, and that, I therefore travel to the commencement of the revolutionary war with America. It is not my intention to swell my present letter beyond the limits actually necessary in the recital of our wrongs in the communication of the unprecedented treatment we have received, by far worse than that extended to very outcasts of society. I shall briefly touch upon our situation from the year 1775 to the peace in 1783, and as briefly state the sufferings we have undergone from 1783 to the present time. At the time of the commencement of the war in 1775, the American colonies stood indebted to the British merchants £4,000,000 sterling and upwards, which were withheld from them during the war, and which it was expected would not be readily discharged upon the cessation of hostilities, and the consequent peace. This conclusion is evident from the stipulation the administration of this country in 1783, when the treaty of peace was agitated, deemed it proper to insist upon, and which was adopted, viz. the 4th article in these words, " It is agreed
" that creditors on either side, shall meet
" with no lawful impediment to the reco-
" very of the full value in sterling money,
" of all bonâ fide debts heretofore contract
" ed ;" and which not only included debts due at the commencement of hostilities in 1775, but also those which had been incur-

red up to the day on which the treaty of peace was made. The right upon our part to insist upon the Americans paying those debts which certain laws of the respective local legislatures of each state in which individuals stood indebted to Britain, interdicted during one period of the war, was acknowledged, and our privilege to sue for recovery of our demands was considered to be revived, and not a doubt remained among the principal part of my brother merchants, but that justice would be impartially, regularly, and without delay administered to us; so much were they impressed with this idea, that the committee of merchants in London, created for the purpose of superintending the interests of their constituents trading to America, expressed their extreme satisfaction at the stipulated provisions of the fourth article of the treaty of peace; but hastily and rashly, indeed publicly declared their full conviction, that the American courts of judicature would instantly dispense even handed justice to the British creditors. That men inured to difficulties, wants, and deprivations, and accustomed to the frequent exercise of evasions and subterfuges, as the American debtors had submitted to during 8 years miseries of war, would instantlychange their acquired habits to pursue the path of honour and honesty, was, I think, rather more than could be believed by the most credulous of the committee. This committee, however, expressed their conviction of the future correct proceedings of the American debtors, and in which sentiment they were joined by the Glasgow merchants, who went even further in their expressions of satisfaction at the stipulations of the 4th article of the treaty of peace, and their belief of the correct proceedings which would take place under it in the American courts, and declared that "every thing has been procured for them which could have been expected, when all circumstances are dispassionately considered;" and even one of our legislators suffered himself to be equally deceived into a similar belief with his constituents; I mean the Lord Advocate, who in the debates upon the provisional articles of the treaty of peace, after adopting their sentiments with considerable stage effect, drew a letter from his pocket, when on the floor of the House of Commons, (I was present at the time) and observed, "I have a letter from the merchants of Glasgow, requesting me to return thanks to ministers for the care they have taken of their interests in the negotiation, for that some had been paid, some secured, and some were in hopes of being paid the debts due by America to them." Sir, not a single attempt was ventured upon by the legislature or judiciary of America, or the local government of the respective states, to carry into effect the stipulations of the 4th article of the treaty of peace, for several years after the peace; nor were the doors of the courts of law opened to the reception of cases of claims on the part of British creditors, in pursuance of the provisions of that article, although the Lord Advocate declared the communication from his constituents to be highly favourable. Yet, I know, and I am sure, that the merchants of Glasgow had reason to agree with me soon after his declaration, that the debts paid "were merely balances of a few shillings, and even that those were only paid for the purpose of decoying the merchants into ill placed confidence of their minutely exact conduct, and to induce them to ship fresh cargoes of goods, impressed as they would be with the scrupulous exactness of their old debtors, as well as that the "securities" taken were of no more avail than the original debts, because whatever objections there might be to the accounts current, would follow the bond, and it is going too far to contend, that the mere act of giving a bond is of equal importance with the actual payment of a debt; although I know full well that such doctrine has been always the creed of American debtors, who when pressed by their British creditors for payment, invariably have observed, "I will pay you with my bond," and deem the payment of the debt to be made from the moment the bond is given. This sort of payment, however, is not of the nature that would pass current upon the Exchange of London, to enforce which would take just as much time as would the original debt, unaccompanied with the solemnity of wax and printed paper, and still liable to every objection that might be made to the accounts current, for the balance of which the bond might have been taken. In one part alone of the Lord Advocate's observations I agree, for not only did some of the Glasgow merchants hope that the Americans would be made to pay their debts, but, I believe, nearly the whole of us; the events which occurred, however, put an end to all expectations, whatever our wishes might have been.——During the war a law was passed in America, compelling British creditors, factors, and agents to leave the colonies of America, and innumerable other impediments were also created, to prevent a British creditor from recovering his debts. One particularly in 1777, sequestering British property, and which impediments were at length oompleted by the total interdiction

of recovery, actually proscribing us, and declaring it to be an act of treason for any American debtor to pay his British creditor, but enabling the American debtor to discharge the responsibility of debt, by payments with their manufacture of paper money into the state treasuries, which in the year 1781 had depreciated so low as 1000 for 1, and as their estimated value of the new currency, was deemed to be equal with sterling amount in the payments into those treasuries; consequently, £1000 currency of the actual value of £1 sterling, discharged a bonâ fide sterling debt of £1000. —It is scarcely of any importance to notice the Suspension Act, respecting payments in paper money in the year 1780, because the act was renewed with renewed vigour in 1782, and no benefits whatever arose to the British creditor from the suspended payments, as they were unable to prosecute the debtors.—The hopes of the constituents of the Lord Advocate were not fulfilled, when the olive branch was substituted for the spear. Although the treaty of peace stipulated for the payment of debts, British creditors were not permitted to sue their American debtors, it being deemed unfair, according to the doctrine of the Americans, to allow them to obtain judgment, while the American creditors had any outstanding demands against their fellow citizens. This doctrine was adopted and persevered in until the year 1791; for, although the legislature repealed the act prohibiting the recovery of British debts in 1787, it was in fact, a virtual continuation of the prohibition, for it was also declared in the same act, that a suspension should continue until the posts were given up to the Americans, (Detroit upon their western frontiers, was one of the posts) and until the negroes who under a proclamation by the British commander, had deserted their servitude, and flocked to our standard, were restored, or compensation was made for the loss sustained by the Americans in consequence of their dereliction; thus did impediments expressly contrary to the provisions of the 4th article of the treaty of peace, against the recovery of British debts, remain in full force; we could not sue our debtors until some time after the adoption of the constitution of the American government under its present form, and which alteration took place I believe in 1788. After the expiration of nearly three years from this period, 8 years after the peace, and 16 years from the commencement of hostilities, viz. in 1791, and after the American creditors had recovered their demands from their fellow-citizen debtors, we were enabled for the first time to commence suits against our debtors, and to recover as we apprehended, as the 4th article of the treaty of peace provided, "the full va- "lue of all bonâ fide debts." I remember well when the article was first publicly declared, asking the opinion of a very worthy man, and a rara avis, an honest lawyer, now no more, what were his sentiments upon the tendency of the expression. Well I recollect his reply, which the event has proved to be correct, that it did not secure to us the payment of 20s. for every pound of our demand, that the full value of all bonâ fide debts, "did not mean" all bonâ fide debts in full, "but that it only guaranteed to us the full value of all bonâ fide debts" at the time we were enabled to get from the debtors as much as they might deem it expedient to pay us. In other words, the actual value of our debts was that which we might be able to force from our debtors (some of whom were not worth a shilling when the courts were open to our appeal, some of whom were then dead, and their property distributed and dispersed into various channels; some of whom had been compelled by law to pay their American creditors, while we were disabled from seeking redress; some of whom had retired with stock and block to the Western Waters; some of whom had transferred their property to others to evade the effect of judgment against them), after 8 years consideration whether they would or would not pay us, and after 8 years adoption of all the chicanery that could be devised by American lawyers, to prevent the recovery of a single shilling in due course of law, and loading us with the incalculable expences of protracted litigation. With all these and innumerable other difficulties,—these innumerable difficulties did we, in addition to the miseries we had experienced from the cruel detention of our property, while our creditors here were clamorous for payment of their demands, which we were utterly unable to discharge, many of us forced into the prisons of the metropolis, to which we had formerly contributed our mite to support in the sunshine of our days, and compelled to take refuge with our families, in the midst of miserable objects and disease, multiply to our severe and bitter lot, by seeking redress in the American courts of law, and by adding expence to the first loss from the rapacity of agents and lawyers. In 1791 we sued our claims in the American courts, and it was in 1793 and not before, a period of 10 years from the treaty of peace, when the first judgment was obtained in the federal court,

a court erected by the new or federal government, as a check upon the state courts; but many of us dreading the great expences attendant upon proceedings in that court, sought, but fruitlessly, for redress in the district or county of the different states; but in which judgments were not obtained until between 2 and 3 years afterwards, avoiding certainly the expences of the federal court, but adding to the great expence of time which we had cruelly been subjected to.—But, Mr. Cobbett, when the courts gave us judgments, they deducted 8 years interest during the war—a very considerable portion of our demand, and when it was proved that a debt had been paid into the American treasuries in their paper money manufacture, which did not exist when the debt was created, and, consequently, not morally binding upon us, it was held to be a satisfaction of our demands, although it never came into our hands, nor was worth one penny to us in any way whatever.—Such a fulfilment of the 4th article of the treaty of peace, entrenched as the American debtors were with innumerable impediments, Mr. Cobbett, as you must see, and no doubt of your own acquired knowledge of our situation are aware, was a derision and mockery. Remonstrances upon remonstrances were made to our own government, to administer relief to us in some shape or other, to keep us from a state of actual want, or to enable us by some strong representation to the American government, to seek redress with some prospect of success, which went on from time to time until towards the end of the year 1794, when the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, was entered into, and by which it was agreed that commissioners should be appointed to carry into effect the stipulations of the 4th article of the treaty of peace, and the American government agreed to become our paymasters.—It is not necessary for me here to state minutely what was done, or rather, what was not done under this commission, for like unto our individual applications, the national authority had as little effect as our endeavours towards a settlement, because I have in my former letter (Vol. X. p. 149 and 297) to you, furnished you with a sufficient statement of the case; it is only necessary for me to observe, that nothing whatever conducing to our individual benefit or interest, was settled, and that we were still condemned to groan under our miseries, to suffer additional delay, and to bear increased expences, while the written proofs we had of the origin of our bonâ fide claims were mouldering away with corroding time, and our living witnesses descending into the vale of life, thus accumulating upon us additional difficulties, instead of clearing our direct path.—Our claims were now calculated to be in amount upwards of £5,000,000 sterling, the whole of which, every shilling, if established by proof, and which we could have proved incontrovertibly at the peace, when the whole was guaranteed to us (notwithstanding the respect I bear to the opinion of my deceased legal friend, whose sentiments I have already mentioned) was stipulated to be secure to us by the 4th article of the treaty of peace, from the individual debtors, but not carried into effect; and by the 6th article of the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, adopted and assumed by the American government, and which was also not carried into execution. I cannot penetrate into the arcana of state, but, no doubt, for wise and prudential political reasons, we the merchants were doomed to be sacrificed, or what is tantamount, our interests were to be surrendered to maintain the peace of the nation; and this sum of £5,000,000 sterling, was to be compounded for by payments on the part of the American government of £600,000 sterling. I find no fault with this negociation and settlement, if our situation as a nation was such as to require the concession and individual sacrifice; but it must be clear to every man totally unacquainted with state maxims, and the policy of government, that it is a moral axiom the nation is bound to indemnify individuals whose interests may be sacrificed for the general good, out of the public purse; that all shall contribute where all are concerned and benefited; which may be brought familiarly to our view, by reflecting that if it be deemed necessary the public should have a road through my land, although I as an individual do set a value upon the spot on which I may have been born, and which in value increased in my estimation with my ripening years; yet this sacrifice must be made by me, and hard as it might be to part with it, it would be only just and proper that I should so do for general benefit. Just indeed it is on the part of the nation requiring it for the public advantage, not a particle of injustice is there in the required act, the only injustice which could arise would be in the determination of government not to compensate me for the deprivation; but government never yet did take from the individual a foot of land, and add it to the common stock, without awarding compensation for the deprivation. If, therefore, the government deemed it politic and prudent to compound £5,000,000 of demands for

£600,000, I hold that government bound to make up the deficiency to the individuals, and to take every precaution that no time be uselessly expended in apportioning the scanty pittance paid by the American government among the hungry claimants. A period of 8 years had elapsed from the date of the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation 19 years after the peace, and 27 years from the commencement of the war, when a convention was entered into between Britain and America, viz. on 8th Jan. 1802, by Lord Hawkesbury, his Majesty's principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on the part of the former, and by Mr. Rufus King, the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States on the part of the latter country, by which it was stipulated that the United States should pay £600,000 sterling in 3 installments, in satisfaction and discharge of the money which the United States might have been liable to pay in pursuance of the provisions of the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, and which amounted to £5,000,000, as I have already mentioned. The last instalment of this money was paid in 1805, and for the purpose of distributing the amount, commissioners were appointed by act of parliament in pursuance of a bill brought into the House of Commons by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the time Attorney General, the beginning of April, 1803, which directed the sum of £600,000 to be divided amongst the several persons in proportion to the amount of their respective claims; and which was, in fact, no more than 12 per cent. of the amount of the whole, viz. £5,000,000, amounting, as I have stated to you in my former communication, to no more than 2s. 4½d. in the pound of every 20s. of "the full value of all bonâ fide debts," as the words of the treaty of peace are. Although the bill was not brought into parliament until the beginning of April, 1803, an office was opened for the reception of claims in September, 1802; and when the Board of Commissioners appointed in the act met, they continued to receive claims until the limited time, by the 7th section of the act of parliament for finally depositing claims, which was fixed for the 1st of June, 1804, after which period no claim could be received. It is, therefore, incorrect to state, as the Morning Post has stated, that the claimants have not been so prompt in coming forward with demands as before; because, if a creditor neglected to make his claim on or prior to the 1st of June 1804, his claims could not be subsequently received. The reverse of the charge of want of promptitude would have been nearer the truth, for a great many creditors were prompt enough to come forward to make claim before the Convention Board, seeing that the British government had compounded for the debts due to the British merchants, and precluded them from resorting either to the American government, or the American individual debtor, who had not from some cause or other made claim with the Board in America, under the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation; but their claims were refused to be received before the Convention Board, because they had not in the first instance made claim in America, under the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation.—We who made our claims in America, have all made our claims to the Convention Board years since, with that promptitude our immediate wants and necessities compelled us to do, and we have followed up this promptitude from the time the Board was formed, unceasingly but unavailingly, to the present time, writhing under the torture of accumulating expence, delays, and impediments to remuneration; and, I cannot even now, Mr. Cobbett, as I observed formerly to you, calculate upon the final decision of the Board upon our respective claims, within less time than I have heretofore stated, long before which period we shall, and indeed will the whole of mankind in present existence, have ceased all concern in sublunary matters: *Singula de nobis anni prædantur euntes.* A reflection much embittered by the innumerable sufferings and hardships and privations we have undergone, during the last 30 years, and those we have still to submit to. Insignificant as is the sum compounded for, it would have been some little relief to the horrors of our reflection, if that composition money had been rendered productive, until the Board could bring themselves to the resolution of putting some little stay to our miseries by deciding our claims; but this, Sir, has not been done. The Morning Post is equally incorrect in the assertion, in the respect that "it was in the power of the trustees to vest the money in Exchequer Bills for the benefit of the claimants, wherever they should come forward," as the fact is, that such proceeding has not been adopted. This observation is a severe censure upon the Board for neglecting and sacrificing the interest of the claimants, if they are empowered to lay out the money

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at interest, or upon the legislature, for not having attended to their interest in authorising such investment, particularly so, as the person who is reported by the Morning Post to have made the observation, is the very person who brought the bill into parliament. That the board are not to blame for the money remaining wrapped up in a napkin, as I have heretofore mentioned, I shall make appear perfectly clear. The eleventh section of the act of parliament, which was passed on the 22d of April, 1803, enacts that the three several installments of £200,000 " shall, as soon after the payment thereof respectively in America, as the same can be done, be remitted to, and paid into the hands of the cashier of the governor and company of the Bank of England, to the account of, and with the privity, and in the names of, the commissioners appointed under this act, *and shall be* and *remain* in the names of the commissioners for the time being under this act, *to be paid to the several and respective persons entitled thereto* under the order of the said commissioners, or any two of them, pursuant to the provisions of this act." Not one word of authority is delegated to the board to invest the money in Exchequer Bills or otherwise, for the benefit of the concern throughout the act; and, consequently, this money might remain in the bank until doomsday, if it could be possible that a board armed with the powers they have by this act, could, in the exercise and in the plenitude of those powers, refrain from deciding upon the cases before them. I will not, as the Morning Post has done, charge the board with acting improperly, in attributing to them power which they are not armed with, or with an improper exercise of the authority they have delegated to them; because, I have been assured that the present commissioners are men of character and ability, qualified in every respect for their arduous duties, and are not insensible to the situation their starving petitioners are, and have been for many years placed in, and are disposed to extend to each claimant his individual share of justice; but, I may without impropriety suppose in the present state of mankind, that it is not impossible others not of equal character and ability, and to whom the harsh treatment we have experienced, and the rigourous measures we have endured may not be known or attended to, may in less time than a century be placed in their stations; and that while those men may be fattening upon the *otium cum dignitate*, some trivial imperfection or other in our respective cases may be held to be of sufficient importance to delay a decision upon them beyond the period of the present century. This may be the case, and of this I do complain as of an event not improbable, as I am informed not one of the present board has youth on his side. Still, however, it might be some consolation for a man of my age and infirmities, to reflect that my great grandson's great grandson might be the better remunerated for my present miserable expectations, if I knew that the money paid into the Bank was laid out in Exchequer Bills, and consequently, accumulating in amount, the simple interest of which in the course of a century, taking the amount as it is now stated to be £475,000, would produce £2,375,000 in the aggregate £2,850,000, though very far short of our claims, still it would be some addition to our confined hopes; but, as it would be a further consolation to know that the greater the resulting benefits accruing, the larger would be our rateable proportion. I have to suggest the adoption of the same rule which is pursued in the City of London, where we mercantile men do not in our practical proceedings content ourselves with a calculation of simple interest profits. Certainly not, for as we receive our money we send it out again into the world, and as this is strictly correct and attended with the reflection that we can calculate upon the advantage of compound interest, which in the time I have mentioned would amount to a very considerable sum, the overplus in the present case, after paying our descendants of the sixth generation handsomely, might be made subservient to the general purposes of the nation. But how can the attempt to put this into practice be made? Where rests the power to make even simple interest of this composition money, Mr. Cobbett, for the act of parliament authorises no such thing; and it seems therefore, necessary that a new act be passed for the express purpose. The present board have some limits to what they shall not do, though from a very minute examination of the act, I cannot discover any rule of conduct positively restricting them to what they shall beneficially do. Let the obloquy remain where it should, in the administration that agreed to sacrifice us for £600,000 and having sacrificed us for that sum, still further added to it by not attending to the benefits which would arise, and in some measure compensate us for the first sacrifice, by directing that scanty pittance to be placed out at interest until the sixth generation of commissioners to meet upon our cases might deem it proper to decide them. The present board, Sir, have no more interest in the application of the monies than you have;

they are the mere tunnel as it were, through which our silvery flood of dollars is to drip into our hands, when it has been purified at the smelting house; for, I consider every day's delay as operating to exude out of us £82. 3s. 10d. simple interest during every 24 hours, the principal sum remaining as a dead and unprofitable concern in the Bank of England cashier's hands, under the act of parliament, totally unemployed. Mr. Cobbett, the good hard dollars hourly losing the polish, such at least is to be collected from the act of parliament, was the intention of the legislature. The board though armed as they are with some very great powers, are notwithstanding not armed with powers for our prospective interest; this however, is not their fault, but the crime of those who originally sacrificed us; and the Morning Post must, therefore, be incorrect, in attributing the expressions it has done to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the very man who prepared the bill, and moved it in the house, and who must have known how an act of parliament operates, expressly declaring that the money shall *remain* with the cashier of the Bank, until paid over to the claimants; but, though our individual interest has been neglected, yet, surely, it would have been well that the legislature had not wholly overlooked that which concerns the national interest. If our prospective interest was beneath their notice, that of the nation is presumed not to be so. Why not have directed that the annual interest of the £600,000 should be appropriated to the current expences of the office of the board. The et cœteras of public offices are not introduced into the national establishment without expence, and £30,000, the yearly interest of the £600,000, would have at least contributed to the discharge of claims upon government for the expence of the office, instead of becoming a permanent charge upon our taxes, as I much fear it will, for the end of the concern is far removed for any definite period. We have now entered into the seventh year of the existence of the American claim office, few claims have been decided, and small indeed has been the rateable pittance which has been doled out to a very few of us, after a patient endurance of sufferings for 33 years, and no prospect whatever presents itself of a final cessation of our miseries, unless the faint spark of life remaining in us should expire, and with that event put an end to all reflection upon our cares.—In my former correspondence, I observed, that much appeared to be done, before we received the scanty portion of our sacrifice, notwithstanding I was gravely assured by one of your correspondents, that all the leading points were decided upon by the Board in Philadelphia, and that it was now only necessary to apply those points to the different cases, and decide upon them. Mr. Cobbett, 7 years have nearly elapsed, and comparatively speaking, we have gained not a shadow of our rights, and for what we have gained we have been compelled to submit in the first instance to the acceptance of 2s. 4½. in the pound composition, when even government acknowledges that twenty shillings is our due, because policy required the state to offer us, the mercantile part of the nation, as an expiatory sacrifice for having dared to demand the fulfilment of the 4th article of the treaty of peace by the Americans. I should hope that government will ultimately see the propriety of making up the difference to us, which I hold it to be bound to do on the principles of common justice, as it was deemed adviseable to concede our property to America without our consent, and to take from us our right to sue our debtors, which we were enabled to do before the convention, or to look to the government of America for redress, if justice was withheld from us by the American judiciary.——Men may flippantly talk of concessions to America, but let every one bring the matter home to his own breast. It is easy to contend for the concession of the rights of others; but, I should wish much to know, if those men who at this time strenuously and vociferously advocate the cause of concessions to America by this nation, are willing themselves to concede what may immediately effect their individual interests. What is the concern of every one is the concern of no one; and we may, therefore, concede as a nation all our just rights, without a direct sacrifice being made of the interest of the individual; this is what those men contend for, but who would vehemently oppose a surrender of their individual interests, though the nation should require it to be done in the manner we have submitted to the surrender. But whatever is yielded to America, whatever concession may be determined upon by this country, I am fully satisfied it will only be considered by America as arising from apprehension; and that America emboldened by our wavering conduct, will never desert her system of extorting concession as long as this country has any thing left to concede.—I have ever found such to be the conduct of individuals of that country; and, I have no doubt, that the collective body retains the virtues of the component parts. My present letter has branched out into greater space

than I expected it would, when I first took up the pen; but, the subject, an inexhaustible one it is, must be my excuse with you, and momentous it is equally to its inexhaustion. Mercantile men who pride themselves on their self importance, and the consequence they consider themselves with respect to the nation at large, may fairly conclude from my observations on the treatment we have experienced, from the neglect with which we have been treated, and from the sacrifice which has been made of us by government, what value is set upon our rank in the common scale: to have suspended us by dozens would have been mercy to us, compared with the treatment we have experienced.—The value government puts upon the rank and character of mercantile men in the state, and their beneficial exertions towards the increase of commerce may be readily estimated. You, Mr. Cobbett, and Mr. Spence have been insisting that we can well do without commerce. One consideration in support of the doctrine you have brought forward into public view, and contended for, you have left to me to furnish you with, that even the government of this country acts as if commerce was unnecessary, from the sacrifice of those who carry it on; and which government assuredly would not do if it was beneficial; certainly, the best method of completely putting an end to commerce, is to sacrifice those at the shrine of the "new morality," which contends for the adoption of nothing but what concerns oneself; a like sacrificing the merchant by whom commerce has been brought to an unprecedented heighth, and the manufactures of the country, which through his means have been raised to a pre-eminence unexampled. Thus to extinguish our importance, is to shew in what view the commerce of the country is held, duly appreciating its value and insignificance. If the remnant of life now remaining to me, and my faculties will permit, I may again trouble you for a space in your Register, for some remarks upon the different decisions by the board under the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, and the board under the convention, now sitting in London, shewing the various proceedings which have taken place when the American debtor was a party, and now that the American debtor is no longer a party, with the objections which have been brought against our claims, which even the American agent for the debtor never contended for, though it was their interest to lessen our demands as much as possible, a difference I cannot account for; for what was declared to be law by the board in America, it does seem to me should be held to be law by the board here; particularly as the present board consists of the identical individuals who composed the majority of the board in America, where they had to contend with men by no means deficient in skill, though possibly not possessing superior ability to the members of the present board, who, I presume, were on that recommendation selected for their office, and appointed to the consideration of the claims of—A RUINED OLD AMERICAN MERCHANT.—*Feb.* 29, 1808.

IRELAND.

SIR;—Catholic emancipation, and the abolition of tithes might perhaps prove auxiliary towards removing the return of the disorders, that have long afflicted Ireland, but their operation could only produce a temporary effect. It is true, that Catholic emancipation, by gratifying the pride of the Romish aristocracy, would occasion sincere efforts on their part, to excite among the lower orders of the Catholics a hearty resistance to French invasion, while the abolition of tithes would put their value into the tenant's pocket during his lease, and so far increase his means of subsistence; it is evident, however, to common sense, that the adoption of such measures could produce no solid or permanent good, when we fairly consider the source from which all the evils spring; rack rents and non-resident landed proprietors, are most certainly the primary and sole cause of all the calamities, which have afflicted that unhappy land for the last century; an exuberant population, ill lodged, ill fed, and ill clothed, will be always ready to join the standard of sedition, for the propensity is in human nature.—To describe evils without prescribing a remedy, is useless, and to prescribe a remedy when there is little hope of its being adopted is nugatory: in spite, however, of such discouraging prospects, I will trespass upon you with my opinion.—Political concessions the most liberal and extensive must prove wholly unavailing. Measures that directly come home to the root of the evil, can only prove efficient. Long have the landed proprietors of Ireland, been in the habit of extorting excessive rents from the oppressed occupiers, without any allowances or deductions for building or repairing their miserable habitations, or improving their land. The arrear to patriotism and humanity, on that score, is deep indeed, and I may venture to affirm that it will never be discharged without the vigorous and determined interposition of the legislature between peasantry and property. This I may be told would be dangerous and unconstitu-

tional: unconstitutional it might be, but the danger lies the other way. Pray what was the suspension of the habeas corpus and the invasion of property to the tune of 10 per cent.? they were and are gulped down, from imperious necessity and for the salvation of the empire.—If Ireland is to be permanently secured to Great Britain, it must be by the courage and energy of the great body of her people, and their efforts can only be obtained by possessing comforts to defend. Political rights are grateful to the mind, they flatter national pride, and aristocratical ambition, but how insignificant are they to the feelings of a large agricultural peasantry, debased and brutalized by filth, and poverty? Can Catholic emancipation give them food, raiment or decent habitations? but what would it do for the Protestants? would it cloth and feed them too? so ignorant, I am persuaded, are numbers of the lower orders of Irish Catholics, and so much have they heard of this said emancipation, that they actually think that it would lodge, clothe and feed them plentifully. At the same time I can see no good reason, why the Irish Roman Catholics should not be completely emancipated; it could not increase their physical powers one particle, nerve a single arm or forge one pike more against the state than already exists. It would be just and liberal, it would be in harmony with the spirit of the constitution; good it might do, mischief none; the experiment, therefore, would be reasonable and politic at the present awful crisis: true, it might mortify protestant pride, long in the exclusive possession of political power. Veteran monopolists do not like that a participation of their privileges should extend to others; that however ought to have no weight with the rulers of a great empire, when its security is at stake.—But to return from this digression and at once to come to the point.—The relief I have in contemplation for the great mass of the Irish peasantry consists of the following measures:—1st. Let all the landed proprietors of Ireland be obliged, in future, to let their farms to the occupiers who actually reside upon, and cultivate them; by this measure, the middle men, or land pirates, will be annihilated:—2d. Let no man occupy for grazing, more than a given quantity of land with modifications with respect to its quality; by this measure bipeds will supplant quadrupeds, and an encreasing population will find food and raiment:—3d. Let no human habitation have less than ten acres of arable and pasture attached to it; this will secure from starvation the family who occupies it:—4th. Let all cottages and farm houses be built and kept in repair, (as in England) by the proprietor:—5th. Let all landed proprietors, who do not reside, at least, six months in the year on their estates, pay an absentee tax of 10 per cent. the produce of which shall be solely applicable, to improve the condition of the lower orders of the people under the direction of a board instituted for that purpose: this will contribute to secure residence. Should the health or age of the proprietor require a different residence, in such case, one of his family may represent him on his estate.—Let an inspector be appointed to each county, and (if that inspector be a well informed Englishman, so much the better) who shall make an annual circuit of the county to which he is appointed, and upon oath report the condition of the peasantry, which report shall be published, specifying the proprietor on whose estate misery prevails: this would be of incalculable benefit towards meliorating the state of the lower orders of the peasantry.—Strong as these measures appear to be, certain I am, that if they are not adopted, or others which shall nearly approximate them, Ireland never can long remain in a state of tranquillity. The times are past, when a great agrarian peasantry will endure oppression without those ebullitions which shock humanity and disgrace the era in which we live. When or where we shall find an administration with vigour and virtue sufficient to carry such measures into effect I know not. In what quarter of the political horizon shall we look for them? In our past rulers, I could contemplate no bold comprehensive plan aimed to embrace the prosperity or to secure the stability and duration of the empire;—their talents as men are unquestionable, their abilities as ministers, contemptible, and their patriotic virtue very suspicious;—during their short reign, never was there a more gross or indecent abuse of power in the distribution of appointments, particularly in that profession where morality and high character should have been religiously consulted:—From the present administration, I can flatter myself with no very sanguine hope, I fear that they are trimmers and want energy to encounter a measure of such prospective magnitude,—it is not fair to prejudge,—may I be mistaken! —I well know that the measures I have suggested would excite the indignation of Irish peers, commoners, squires, and land-jobbers; to them I must beg leave to observe, that I really wish to save their throats from being cut, their lands laid waste, their country desolated, and the British empire overthrown.—It is not a little irritating to hear

an Hibernian member, with firm front, start up in the Imperial Parliament, and harangue with patriotic ardour, on the calamities of his country; he boldly affirms, that if *something* be not immediately done for Ireland, that it will become a French colony:—Agreed, but who is to do that something?—why such men, as the very honourable gentleman on his legs,—let me ask him, who is to enable the miserable wretches on his estate to clothe, feed and lodge better, but he himself? would he wish to thrust his hand into the public purse to improve the condition of his tenants? agreed,—let him do so, provided that he will replenish that purse when it is empty;—does he not put the whole rental of his estate into his pocket, undiminished by repairs, property-tax, allowances for improvements, or audit dinners, while an English landlord hardly receives three-fourths of his rent clear, and pays for every consumeable article an enormous price?—In a word, there are no landed proprietors in Europe who owe so much to their country, as the gentlemen of Ireland; there is no country for which God has done so much, and man so little.—Let me exhort those gentlemen, before it be too late, to give up, (at least for seven years) the charms of Harrowgate, Margate, and all the gates and mouths, too, with precious Bath and voluptuous London, and reside in their own country,—let them lower the rents of their little tenants, and encourage, not *excise*, their industry. Let them contribute to render the habitations of the peasantry decent and comfortable. Let them give bounties for order and cleanliness, and by frequent inspection see that the intention of such bounty be carried into effect; a mere *fiat*, will never do in a country where the people in many parts have never in fact, been completely civilized—the residence of the many would give peace and security to the whole.—Between cowardice and dissipation Ireland has been nearly deserted, so that the few gentlemen who have had virtue and fortitude to stand their ground in the country parts actually maintained posts of danger.—In point, I knew a gentleman, who, for two years, never went to bed until break of day, he and his family, even including his wife, were on duty every night,—had other gentlemen acted with similar courage, vigilance, and perseverance as he did, the late rebellion never could have been so horribly powerful and tremendous as it was,—nay, it might have been prevented entirely—I know that it had been long the practice in Ireland, when the oppressed broke out into acts of outrage against their oppressors, for senatorial adventurers, forensian demagogues, and inflammatory pamphleteers, to direct the storm against the state. Government, which had never provoked the insurrection, was bound, however, to put it down by military force; hence, being considered by the insurgents as allies to the landed tyrants, who were the original aggressors, both became the common object of democratical attack.—The fact is, Government and the Irish peasantry are far distant from each other. I know of no point in which they are in direct contact, except in the tax on hearths, and even that small duty escapes the chimney of the solitary cottager, or the cottager with one hearth.—Whether the duty on whisky or tobacco be any real grievance, I must submit to economists and moralists,—under a free constitution it is not easy to conceive how an agricultural peasantry can be oppressed by its government, I mean, where a just usage and a humane order of things, prevail; for, most assuredly, the quantum of rent should be regulated by the quantum of taxation to which the renter is subject, this is so obvious a truth, that it requires no illustration.—It is high time that the saddle were placed on the right horse,—to this very hour there are many, even thinking people in England, who are persuaded that all those disorders that have afflicted and disgraced Ireland, have been occasioned by political misrule and persecution from government, whereas white boys, oak boys, and all the boys sprang from causes in which government had no more to do than the Emperor of China.—Since the house of Hanover ascended the British throne, the people of Ireland have felt no impulse from their political rulers, by which their comforts or happiness were diminished or disturbed.—In England, all oppressions flow from Government, in Ireland they are inflicted by the rapacious hand of the landed interest.—Your most obedient servant,

26th Feb. 1808. J. W.

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Sir,—Having lately conversed with several gentlemen on the subject of the late demand made by government on the Bank of England, for the loan of three millions, to be repaid by exchequer bills (not bearing interest) six months after the signing a definitive treaty of peace, and amongst the number were members of the imperial parliament, I found them warmly to espouse the conduct of government on the occasion; and as the arguments generally made use of by them led to the same point, I conclude, that those who have defended the princi-

ples on which the demand has been made, have drawn their conclusions from the same source.—The argument is this, that a person keeping money with his banker has a right to use his balances in any way he pleases, and therefore the bank of England, standing in the situation of banker to government, that government have an undoubted right to make use of their own balances. On this subject, sir, I most perfectly coincide. But is this a fair statement? I contend it is not; for if the premises are good, that government have a right to make use of their own balances, which I allow, then what occasion was there for any communication to take place between the chancellor of the exchequer and the governor and directors of the bank of England, as to the loan of three millions without interest. I certainly should not communicate with my banker on the subject of the disposition of my balances in his hands, and of course there was no necessity for government making any communication to the bank of England as their banker. I consider therefore, sir, that the question resolves itself into a very narrow compass.—Government have either been unnecessarily demanding their right, or they have demanded what ought not to have been in the power of the governor and directors of the bank of England to grant.—For if the three millions are not intended to be drawn from the balances of government in the bank, they must consequently be taken from the surplus or savings of the company; and I cordially agree with the author of a late publication, addressed to the proprietors of bank stock, that such an accumulation ought never to have taken place; for whenever the savings or profits had warranted a division, it ought by every principle of honour and justice to have been made.—And, sir, I am bold to assert, that men who have supported the minister on this occasion, have condemned the conduct of the governor and directors in placing the company in such a situation as to have induced government to make the demand, from a knowledge which they presumed they possessed of the sums that had (so unjustly) been suffered to accumulate, to the manifest injury of each individual proprietor.—I trust, sir, that at the first general court held at the bank, the question as to whether the three millions are only to be drawn from the balances of government, or whether they are to be considered as a loan arising from the savings of the company, will be brought forward, in order that the transaction may be placed in its true light, and prevent future misrepresentations; and, should it appear that the three millions are to be taken from the balances of government, I do not consider that any injury will be sustained by the company, but that the flourishing state of their finances will enable them to continue with the addition of a bonus, their usual division of twelve pounds per cent. per anuum. But, should it appear that the three millions are to be taken from the savings of the company, it will be necessary to submit a motion on the subject to the court of proprietors, strongly urging them to adopt such a line of conduct as will prove the means of procuring for themselves a fair distribution of that property they have so unjustly been kept out of.—I remain, sir, your obedient humble servant,—JUSTICE.—Feb. 28, 1808.

SINKING FUND.

SIR;—Your correspondent, C. S., could not discover any sense in my "plausible" doubts, which you placed in your register of 14th November,—but to enlighten my ignorance, he charges me with sinister designs, because "I have dragged out *his* conclusions "before your readers, and left behind the "curtain those of Mr. Pitt and Lord H. "Petty,"—as if such fine names, might not be innocently omitted for sake of brevity. He reduced their practical calculations to brief,—he adopted their conclusions, not without contempt for the authors, and now he flies to their deified names for shelter from the rule of three. His quotation 9 times, of Lord H. Petty's quotation of Mr. Pitt, was needless,—for every one had by rote, how that angel of a man *confessed* ('twas a timely and well acted confession) that a nation out of debt, is in the high road to ruin. C. S. goes on to dispel my doubts, thus (p. 940): "unquestionably they are ignorant of "the effects of competition and capital, "who can doubt the extent of the mischiefs "that must result from the *competition* of "600 millions, with a capital of 100 mil-"lions."—Now, Sir, I appeal to you, that I did not doubt such effects, if the *causes* were possible. What I doubted was, that if the 600 millions be paid *by taxes*, the circulating capital can be encreased thereby, and of course I doubted that the competition so much dreaded, can have existence. C. S. goes on (p. 941) "now that the extensive "calamities of a *sudden* extinction of the "debt is *admitted* on all hands"!!! How? a certain consequence of an impossible cause? —no, but if it be paid by means of the Sinking Fund, which must take up before it pays down, (as we giddy-pated Irish think) any competition between the 100 &. the

600 millions, is impossible. The trustees to the Sinking Fund have already taken up, say (for convenience of round numbers) 100 millions of the 600 of debt,—and I ask, if the money which they paid away for the said 100 millions, did encrease the circulating capital of 100 to 200 millions;—if it did, or did not, C. S.'s premises or conclusions are false, q. e. d.—Hear him again, "a no- "minal encrease has the same effect on real "money, as a real encrease could have, "and all he contends for is, that it must "nominally encrease to the amount of the "debt, and therefore that the real depreci- "ation must be in the proportion which the "debt bears to the circulation." This is mere kettle-drumming, unless it means payment of the debt *without taxes*, or that the debentures in circulation are no part of the circulating capital, nominal or real, which would be to say, that they are nothing at all. It has no relation to the doubts which I have put in one sentence, "that payment "of the national debt by means of taxes, ta- "ken out of the circulating capital, can "encrease it." His third sub-division of my doubts, says, that my "notion" is old, —in his first part, he says, "if it be not "just, it is new."—but be it old or new I entreat you Mr. Cobbett, to inform a society of Irishmen, who almost adore your love of your own country, whether the Sinking Fund can take a debenture out of the market until its value be first taken out of circulation, and whether 100 millions already discharged, were gathered out of a pocket where that sum was not, a miracle which our Irish faith cannot admit unless *you* make it clear.—As for C. S.'s notable advice, "to "take peace any how,—to surrender the na- "val dominion,—to go back where our fore- "fathers left us,—to teach our population "the use of arms, and our soldiers, agri- "culture, &c." (p. 947), I shall only say, that it is a pity he omitted the whole plan of the law-giver called Gonzalo, in Shakespeare's Tempest,—"I would by contraries "execute all things,—no *traffic* would I "admit,—*letters* should not be known,— "poverty, riches, none. No occupation, "—all men idle, and women too, but in- "nocent and pure,—treason would I not "have, and nature should bring forth all "abundance to feed my innocent people, "&c. &c."—C. S. concludes, "shew us that "no real or nominal encrease will take place "if the national debt be paid by means of "taxes, and then we shall confess our error, "but till then we maintain, &c. &c."—Sir, this is cruel, that a professor,—a writer of eight long essays, occupying 60 columns of your excellent work, should thus throw the burden of proof on his ignorant audience,— but I have only suggested doubts, and I leave them to the digestion of C. S.'s pupils. —Osgur.—20*th February*, 1808.

COURT OF ADMIRALTY.

Sir,——Having perused in your Register of the 14th ult. a letter signed R., wherein your correspondent complains of abuses existing in the administration of the prize-laws, and committed (as he says) under the authority of the court of admiralty; I am induced, partly by reflections arising out of the facts stated in that letter and partly by some observations suggested by the late orders of council, to submit for your consideration a few brief remarks, not on any individual abuses in practice committed by, or under the authority of this judicial court, but on some radical defects (as such they appear to me) in its theory and constitution.—I have, indeed, Sir, long thought, and the public have thought with me, that there is much, very much, which calls for enquiry and reform in a court deciding, as this does, according to the laws of nations, on the rights and interests of the subjects, not only of this, but of foreign kingdoms also; and which ought, therefore, in its tone and temperament, its character, and its habits, to be regulated by the most scrupulous delicacy of judicial accuracy.— The first and most objectionable trait I am led to notice in the complexion and character of this court is the following:—The right Honourable Judge, who presides therein, and decides upon the cases broughtfor trial and for adjudication, in pursuance of orders issued by the privy council, is himself a member of that deliberative and executive body, wherein the justice and expediency of those orders is decided upon, and by whose authority they are consequently issued.—But, Sir, having thus discharged his duty as a privy counsellor, this same individual acting in his judicial capacity has to carry into execution those orders he has himself assisted in framing, and the discharge of which latter duty proves lucrative to himself in proportion tothe extent of these previous orders.—For instance, should it be debated in the privy council, of which this judge is, as I have stated, a member, whether an order for detaining and subjecting to trial the ships of neutral nations should be made to extend to Swedes and Prussians or to Prussians only, the profits afterwards accruing to him in his capacity of judge are in their amount materially affected by the determination of such

question whereto he is himself assisting by his opinion and advice.—Surely, Sir, if such a combination of legislative and judicial functions can be in any wise constitutionally centered in the same individual; the execution of the latter should be compensated by a fixed and limited salary (I care not how large—the talents, the exertions and the integrity of the present judge of the admiralty deserve every honor and claim high remuneration), nor should that officer be permitted to enrich himself by judgments passed on vessels detained by his own order, and which must, as I have said, prove lucrative in proportion to the scope and extent of that order.—You, Sir, who so ably exposed the unconstitutional inconsistency of a chief justice of the king's bench being a member of the cabinet, will, I am sure, admit the equal incongruity manifest in a judge of the admiralty (paid as he at present is) having a seat in the privy council. If the former be a source of power unreconcilable with the freedom, the latter is a source of profit no less incompatible with the purity of the constitution. British justice, Mr. Cobbett, in the spotlessness of its chastity, should, like the wife of Cæsar, be inaccessible even to the suspicion of a reproach Shoud you deem the present worthy of insertion in your Register, I shall trouble you with some further remarks on this court of judicature.—I am, Sir, &c.

30th November, 1807. Z.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

ENGLAND.——*On the 9th of Feb.* 1808, *the Capture of the Danish West India Islands was announced in the London Gazette.—The following are the Articles of Capitulation.*

(Concluded from p. 416.)

Sir Alexander Cochrane, Knight of the Bath, and Commander in Chief of the Naval Forces employed at Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands, on the part of his Britannic Majesty, and Colonel Van Scholten, Commandant of the said Danish Islands, on the part of his Majesty the King of Denmark.

Art. I. The islands of St. Thomas and St. John's, and their dependencies, are hereby placed under the protection of his Britannic Majesty.—Answer. War being declared between the two nations, the islands of St. Thomas and St. John's, and their dependencies, must be surrendered to the forces of his Britannic Majesty.—Art. II. Military honours are to be shewn at the surrender: the officers keep and continue to carry their swords.—Answer. Agreed to.—Art. III. All the inhabitants of the said islands are to enjoy the fullest security for their persons, property, and other rights, as well as a free exercise of their religion.—Answer. All bonâ fide Danish inhabitants shall enjoy the fullest security for their persons and properties, as well as a free exercise of their religion, provided they do not in any measure cover, or attempt to cover, the property of the enemies of Great Britain and Ireland. By property is to be understood, all goods and merchandise, now on shore. And to render any farther explanation on this head unnecessary, it is required, that all Danish inhabitants, and those of other nations, not at war with Great Britain, shall give in, when called upon, and if demanded, on oath, a strict and impartial account of all property belonging to the enemies of Great Britain, either in their own possession, or within their knowledge, thereby fully securing the intention of this article.—Art. IV. Arms and ammunition to be delivered by a commission composed of officers of both parties; also the magazines and provisions, and what else may be found in the forts, as it shall be found to day according to returns to be drawn up.—Answer. Agreed to.——Art. V. All Danish officers, and the garrison, to be conveniently and safely conducted to their native country; and those that might desire to proceed viâ America or elsewhere, to be provided with proper passports, or to remain in this country if they wish.—Answer. The garrison must be considered as prisoners of war, and conveyed to Europe as speedily as possible, and every indulgence shewn them.—Art. VI. No military to be quartered in houses, but in barracks and proper rooms to be assigned by the burgher council, and a commission appointed to that end.—Answer. Agreed to; but the buildings must be such as the quarter master general approves of.—Art. VII. The Danish laws and ordinances to remain in force. All courts and judicial offices to be occupied by the present officers. Delinquents under confinement not to be released until their sentence is passed and enforced.—Answer. The Danish laws and ordinances shall remain in force, subject to the pleasure of his Britannic Majesty. The judicial offices to continue occupied by the present persons; but they, as well as all civil officers, must be subject to the approbation of the commanders in chief. The latter part of this article is agreed to on the same condition. An English custom house will be established on the same basis as in the British colonies.—Art. VIII. The king's and public treasuries, all public book keepings, and accounts, archieves and protocols remain unmolested, under the hands of the

respective officers, for mutual security and use.—Answer. All public property, and all property belonging to the King of Denmark, or to his government, must be given up (to his Britannic Majesty), and all public papers and records must be submitted to the inspection of the British. The records and papers will be allowed to remain in the proper offices.——Art. IX. His Majesty the King of Denmark, having advanced loans to the planters, the said planters continue to pay off according to the method regulated, unto his said Majesty the King of Denmark, who retains the right of mortgage on the estates.—Answer. Answered in the last article; but any sum now due, shall be paid without delay, to such persons as shall be appointed by the commanders in chief (subject to the pleasure of his Britannic Majesty).—Art. X. No inhabitant shall be compelled to carry arms, or perform duty, when he has made his oath of neutrality.—Answer. Agreed to; but they will be required to take an oath of allegiance to the British government, expressing that they will not, either openly or secretly, do any thing hostile to the British government.——Art. XI. The Americans shall be permitted, without constraint, to export the produce of the islands, and to provide them with necessities. The inhabitants are allowed to ship their produce to America.——Answer. These colonies must trade under the same laws as govern the British West India islands.—Art. XII. The free coloured people of this island shall be regarded and protected as heretofore under the Danish government, and they shall not be forced to do any military duty.—Answer. The Danish free coloured people will be protected as heretofore, and will not be forced to do any military duty; but they must take an oath of allegiance, conformably to the tenth article.—Art. XIII. In the general claims of Danish and neutral property to be respected, as belonging to its lawful owners, is also comprehended the vessels and all property afloat in the harbours, or what might arrive during the time the Danish colonies may remain in the possession of his Britannic Majesty.—Answer. Answered by the reply to the third article.—Art. XIV. Slaves to remain the undisputed property of their present lawful owners.—Answer. Slaves being property, this has already been settled by the answer to the third article.——Art. XV. The police of this island continues to perform its official functions with the same authority as under the Danish government, and according to the laws, and usages of the country.——Answer. This has already been answered by the reply to the seventh article.—Art. XVI. The paper money issued by his Danish Majesty is to remain in circulation as heretofore.—Answer. Granted, subject to the pleasure of his Britannic Majesty.—All the forts, military posts, and vessels of war, must be given up as soon as the capitulation is ratified by the commanders in chief.—*Dated, St. Thomas, Dec.* 21, 1807.

Articles of capitulation for the surrender of the Danish Island of Santa Croix, and its dependencies, entered into between General Henry Bowyer, commander of the land forces, and Rear Admiral the Honourable Sir Alexander Cochrane, Knight of the Bath, and commander in chief of the naval forces employed at Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands, on the part of his Britannic Majesty, and Governor Lillienschiold, of the said Danish island and dependencies, on the part of his Majesty the King of Denmark.

Art. I. By delivering up the island, all military honours are to be given. The garrison to march out with their arms, ammunition, drums beating, and flying banners. The troops shall on no account whatsoever, be considered as prisoners of war. The infantry and cavalry to remain in undisturbed possession of their arms. The corps of artillery to keep in possession two field pieces and an ammunition waggon.—Answer. The garrison shall march out with all the honours of war, as expressed, and the officers shall keep their swords; but all must be prisoners of war, and all arms, except officers' swords, shall be faithfully delivered up.——Art. II. The entire military force shall have liberty to remain in their quarters in the island, and receive their usual pay and victuals, until the same, through suitable means, and upon British expence, can be transported to some convenient place in Denmark, in possession of his Danish Majesty. None of the forces to be permitted to enter into the British service; and all to keep possession of their luggage and equipage. Should any of the officers wish to go to America, or any other neutral country, on their way home, they are to be provided with passports to that effect, and they will be permitted to stay two months in the island, from the time this capitulation is signed.—Answer. The garrison will be conveyed to England as soon as ships can conveniently be provided, and every indulgence will be shewn them. Their pay cannot be paid by the British, but they will receive the usual rations and allowances issued to prisoners of war. The officers and men will have their private property preserved to them. Passports shall be given to such officers as may require them, to go to America. Those officers who wish to re-

main two or three months, shall be allowed, and the men shall be quartered as long as they remain on the island. No other answer can be given to this article, except that the officers may rely upon every respect and civility being shewn to them ——Art. III. Those military officers, who wish to remain in the island, are permitted to do so.—— Answer. Agreed to.—Art. IV. All the arms and ammunition to be delivered up by a commission of officers of both parties; also the royal stores and provisions, and what else of his majesty's property shall be found in the forts; also the money in the king's treasuries, all according to the specification which is to be made as soon as the country is surrendered.—Answer. Agreed to; but a bonâ fide account supported by proofs shall be given.——Art. V. All churches and religious congregations shall be supported in their respective rights and privileges.—— Answer. Agreed to.—Art. VI. The Danish laws and special ordinances of this country, shall remain in full and uncontrolled vigour and execution as hitherto; and justice to be administered by the persons now in office. The appeal from the upper court, to go as usual to the high court of justice at Copenhagen. All the civil officers are to remain in the administration of their respective offices. The police of this island is to be administered as hitherto, with the same authority as under the Danish government, according to the received usages of the island, and by the same persons.—— Answer. The Danish laws and ordinances shall remain in full force until the peace. The same officers, judicial and civil, shall remain in their several places, but subject to the pleasure of the commander in chief.—The appeal from the upper courts, must go to his Britannic Majesty in council. The police will remain undisturbed, and exercised by the same persons.—— Art. VII. All private property belonging to persons present or absent, to individuals, or bodies corporate, of every denomination, is to be respected, and the proprietors to remain in full and uncontrolled possession and administration of the same, by themselves, or by their attornies.—The inhabitants of this island are to have it in their power either to dispose of their produce here, or to ship it to England, America, or elsewhere.—Answer. All Danish property on shore (except such produce as may have been relanded from on board ship since the blockade of the island; and such coffee the produce of St. Dominica now stored here) shall be fully secured to the proprietors, provided they do not in any manner cover, or attempt to cover, the property of the enemies of Great Britain and Ireland.—The latter part of this article will be referred to in the answer to article XIII.—Art. VIII. No inhabitant shall be compelled on any pretence whatever to bear arms against his Danish Majesty, or any other power, or perform any military duty. The inhabitants are to keep their arms and ammunition; those who wish to remain on the island, shall swear to observe a strict neutrality, and those who may wish to quit it, shall be allowed to dispose of their property, or to appoint attornies for the administration of the same.—Answer. The inhabitants shall not be compelled to bear arms against his Danish Majesty, but they must take an oath of allegiance, binding themselves to do nothing hostile against the British government, openly, or secretly.—They shall keep their arms, but subject to the controul of his Britannic Majesty's governor.—They may remain in the island, or quit it, as they please; they may also dispose of their properties, and appoint attornies for the administration of the same.—Art. IX. The free people of colour shall continue to enjoy their freedom and property, and in every respect to be treated as the other inhabitants.—Answer. Agreed to; they taking the oath of allegiance to the British government.—Art. X. No officer or soldier shall be billetted on the inhabitants, every assistance shall be given to procure proper quarters.—Answer. Agreed to; but proper quarters shall be assigned to the British garrison, which shall be approved of by the quarter master general of the army.—— Art. XI. The loans belonging to his Danish Majesty, are to be considered, as they really are, private property.—Answer. All property whatever, which in any way belongs to the King of Denmark must be surrendered to his Britannic Majesty the King of Great Britain and Ireland; and all sums now due on loans, as well as what may become so, must be regularly paid to commissioners appointed to receive the same; but the principles of equity which have governed his Danish Majesty's instructions on the subject, will be observed.——Art. XII. All public books, archives, and registers of government, or the burgher council, and all other public offices, shall be held sacred, and unmolested in the respective offices, under the care of the present officers.——Answer. Agreed to; subject to the inspection of the British government.—Art. XIII. The ports of the colony shall be open to all American and all other neutral vessels, which shall be permitted to import provisions and supplies, and to export sugar and rum, and other colonial produce, free of duties.——The inhabi-

tants shall enjoy the same liberty of importation and exportation in their own vessels, and with regard to the payment of customs and duties on importation, be placed on a footing with the most favoured British colonies.—Answer. The colony must trade subject to the British laws, as in force in the British West India islands, and shall have whatever advantages are allowed to the most favoured British colony.——Art. XIV. His Danish Majesty has, for the use of this and the other Danish islands, issued a certain paper currency, whereof a considerable sum is now in the possession of the community. As such paper money has hitherto passed, to the great convenience of the inhabitants, it is to pass hereafter as current money, as well as joes, dollars, rials, stivers; and no alteration to be made in their respective values.—Answer. Agreed to; subject to the pleasure of his Britannic Majesty.—Art. XV. Certain persons, Danes, having engaged in a dangerous conspiracy, for the purpose of subverting, even by means of assassination, the existing order of things, the enquiry already instituted is to proceed against the persons arrested, and such others as may hereafter be detected to have been implicated, in the same manner as if the colony had remained under the Danish flag; and when the enquiry is at an end, those persons are to be sent to Denmark to take their trials.—Answer. Agreed to; but from this time all further proceedings must be subject to the final orders of the King of Great Britain and Ireland.—Art. XVI. The commanders in chief are to dispatch immediately two swift sailing vessels to Denmark with copies of this capitulation.—Answer. The commanders in chief will forward immediately by an English ship of war any dispatches that the governor may have viâ London.——The forts and batteries shall be delivered up as soon as these articles are ratified by the commanders in chief.—*Dated, Frederickstadt, Santa Croix, Dec. 25, 1807.*

PORTUGAL.—*Proclamation of General Junot, 1st February, Lisbon,* 1808.

Inhabitants of the kingdom of Portugal.—Your interests have engaged the attention of his Majesty the Emperor and King, our master, all irresolution ought to disappear; the destinies of Portugal are brightening, and her future happiness is secured, because Napoleon the great has taken her under his omnipotent protection.—The prince of Brazil, by leaving Portugal, renounced all his rights and sovereignty over this kingdom. The house of Braganza has ceased to reign in Portugal; the Emperor Napoleon wills, that this fine country shall be governed entirely in his name, by the general in chief of his Army.—The task which this mark of the benevolence and confidence of my master inposes on me, is of difficult execution, but I hope to perform it in a proper manner, supported as I am by the labour of the most intelligent men of this kingdom, and the kind disposition of its inhabitants.—I have formed a council of government to enlighten me with regard to the good which I must do; and perennial Administrations shall be appointed, in order to point out to me the means of improving the administration, and establishing order and economy in the management of the public wealth. I shall order roads to be made and canals formed, to facilitate communication, and to cause agriculture and national industry to flourish, two branches indispensibly required for the prosperity of a country, which it will be easy to restore to a people, enlightened, persevering, and intrepid.—The Portuguese troops, commanded by the most deserving of their chiefs, will soon form but one family with the soldiers of Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, and Friedland; and no rivalry will exist between them, but that of valour and discipline.—The public revenue, well managed, will secure to every person employed in its administration, the reward of his labours; and public instruction, that only source of the civilisation of nations, shall be diffused through the different provinces, and Algrave and upper Beira will also produce their Camoens. The religion of your forefathers, the same which we all profess, shall be protected by the same hand which restored it to the vast French empire, free from the superstition, which disgraced it; justice will be equally administered, freed from all delays and arbitrary proceedings which degrade it.—Public tranquillity shall no more be disturbed by daring high-way robbers, the offspring of idleness; and should any incorrigible miscreants be found, an active police shall rid the country of them. No hideous beggars shall henceforth offend the eyes of the industrious inhabitants of this superb capital, nor of the interior of the country; workhouses shall be erected for that purpose, where the maimed poor shall find an asylum, and the idle be employed in labour necessary for his own maintenance and preservation.—Inhabitants of the kingdom of Portugal, be peaceful and without fear; repel the instigations of those who wish to lead you to rebellion, and who do

not care how much blood is shed provided it be the blood of the continent; confide implicitly in our exertions for your welfare; you will reap all its fruits. Should it be necessary, in the first moment, to make some sacrifices, they will be solely required to place the government in a proper condition to meliorate your fate. They are indispensably necessary for the sustenance of a large army, required for the execution of the vast projects of the Great Napoleon. His watchful eyes are fixed on you, and your future happiness is certain. He will love you as much as his French subjects: endeavour to deserve his favours by a respectful conduct and submission to his will.

PORTUGAL.—*Decree of General Junot, 1st February*, 1808.

1. The kingdom of Portugal shall henceforth be entirely governed in the name of his Majesty the Emperor and King, by the general in chief of the French army in Portugal.—2. The council of regency appointed by his Royal Highness the Prince of Brazil, became suppressed from the very moment that the said Prince left the kingdom of Portugal.—3. There shall be a council of government under the presidency of the general in chief, composed of a secretary of state, charged with the administration of the interior and of the finances, with two counsellors of government, one of which shall be charged with the department of the interior, and the other with that of the finances; further, of a secretary of state charged with the war and marine department, assisted by one counsellor of government charged with the war and marine department; and of one chancellor of government, charged with the department of justice and religious worship, with the title of *Regedor*. There shall be a secretary general charged with the archives.—4. All the Corregedores in the neighbouring districts, all ordinary judges and justices, civil and criminal; in one word, all the public officers shall be confirmed in their places, with the exception of such dismissals as the interest of the state shall render necessary, and of the changes which may be found required in the various appointments they hold, and the nature of their functions.—5. M. Herman is appointed secretary of state, and charged with the department of the interior and the finances; Don Pedro de Mello is nominated chancellor of government; M. d' Auvere is charged with the department of the finances; M. Lhurte is appointed secretary of state for the war and marine department; court De S. Pais is nominated counsellor of government for the department of war and that of the marine; M. Principal Castro is appointed chancellor of government for the department of justice and religious worship, with the title of Regedor; M. Vienez Voublanc is appointed secretary general.—6. In every province there shall be an Administrator general, with the title of *Corregedor-Mór*, charged with the direction of all the branches of administration; he shall keep a watchful eye over the interests of the province, point out to government such improvements as it shall be necessary to make, as well with regard to agriculture as to industry in general. He is to correspond on the above subject with the secretary of state, to whose department they respectively belong, and with regard to such matters as concern justice or religious worship, with the *Regedor*.—There shall also be in each province a general officer, charged with the preservation of public tranquillity and order. His other functions shall be merely military, but on public festivals and solemn occasions he shall be placed on the right of the *Corregedor-Mor*.—There shall be a *Corregedor Mor* in the province of Estremadura, who shall riside in Coimbra, and a *Corregedor-Mor* in Lisbon, and the districts belonging thereto, which shall be defined and bounded in an exact manner.

PORTUGAL.—*Decree of General Junot, dated Lisbon, 1st February* 1808.

In pursuance of his imperial Majesty's decree, bearing date the 23d December, 1807, in the name of his said Majesty, we, the governor of Paris, first aid-de-camp of his imperial Majesty, general-in-chief of the French army in Portugal, have decreed and do decree as follow:—Art. I. An extraordinary war-contribution of forty millions of crusades, shall be levied on the kingdom of Portugal. The contribution of twelve millions of crusades, imposed and already discharged since the arrival of the French shall be set off from the present contribution, and be accounted for by our receiver general.—II. Towards the said extraordinary contribution, the merchants, bankers, and holders, of rents and contracts in the kingdom of Portugal, shall pay six millions of crusades, through the intervention of the board of trade, which is proportionally to divide the said sum on all the individuals, according to the fortune which they are known or supposed to possess; and this contribution shall be discharged in the following manner:—The first third shall be

paid the 10th of the month of March next ensuing; the second third shall be paid the 1st of May; and the third shall be paid the 1st of August.—III. All English manufactures being liable to confiscation on the sole ground of their origin, shall be ransomed by the merchants who possess the same, and who are at liberty to dispose thereof as they please, by paying one third part of their value, according to their invoices. The said payment shall be made in three instalments, and at the periods fixed in the preceding articles.—IV. All gold and plate of all the churches, chapels, fraternities of the city of Lisbon, and the district belonging thereto, shall be carried to the mint, received by the treasurer thereof, under the inspection and direction of the director of the mint, within the term of 15 days. In the churches no silver vessels shall remain, but such as are required for the decent observance of religious worship, and of those vessels a list shall be delivered, signed by the person or persons who are charged with the custody and management thereof. The person who carries the same to the mint, shall receive from the treasury a receipt, in an authentic form, for the articles delivered. All persons convicted of fraud, either with regard to the declaration of the articles existing in such churches, or left there, or with respect to any like articles embezzled for their own use, shall be sentenced to pay four times the value of the article not declared or embezzled.—V. All the articles above mentioned, belonging to churches, chapels and fraternities in the provinces, shall be delivered at the houses of the receivers of tythes, within the term of fifteen days, on the same condition and penalties mentioned in the fourth article. The several receivers shall give authentic receipts for the same, and send the articles received to the mint in Lisbon, the treasurer of which is to give them a proper receipt for the same. The above receivers shall have an escort, if required.—VI. The total amount of the value of the said articles shall be deducted from the present contribution.—VII. All archbishops and bishops of the realm, all prelates and superiors of religious orders of both sexes, the regular and secular congregations which possess landed property, or capitals placed out on interest, shall contribute two-thirds of their annual produce, in case that the latter does not exceed sixteen thousand crusades: should it exceed sixteen thousand crusades, they shall contribute three fourths of the said produce; they shall, however, all be exempted from the payment of tithes in the present year.—VIII. In fifteen days after the publication of the present decree, all prelates shall be bound to deliver to the Secretary of State of the interior and of the finances, a correct return of their yearly income, which he shall cause to be examined and verified. And every person whose return shall be found incorrect, shall be sentenced to pay double the amount of his contribution. The said fine shall be recovered out of the property of the offender by the readiest means of execution.—IX. The first third part of this contribution shall be delivered at the office of the Receiver General of the contributions and public revenue of Portugal, within the term of one month next ensuing the publication of the present decree, by the prelates above mentioned residing in Lisbon; and within the term of six weeks, by those who reside in the provinces.—X. The second third part shall be delivered at the said office within six months next ensuing the delivery of the first third, by such prelates as reside in Lisbon, and in one month after the first delivery, by those who reside in the provinces.—XI. The last one third part shall be delivered at the said office, one month after the delivery of the second, by such prelates as reside in Lisbon, and three months after the second delivery, by such prelates as reside in the provinces.—XII. All persons who possess church livings of 600 to 900 milreis per ann., shall contribute two-third parts of their annual income, and should such livings exceed 900 milreis per annum, they shall contribute three-fourths of the annual produce; the payment thereof shall be made into the chest of the ordinary receiver of tithes of the district, under the inspection of the respective superintendants of tithes, who are to examine the said returns, and the same penalties shall be inflicted on the offenders.—XIII. The respective receivers of tithes shall, under the inspection and direction of the superintendants, deliver within the shortest time possible, the amount of the sum by them received into the chest of the Receiver-General of the public revenue and contributions of Portugal.—XIV. All the knights commanders of the three military orders, and of the order of Malta, shall contribute two thirds of the produce of their commanderies, in the installments and under the penalties above-mentioned, with regard to the prelates.—XV. All the holders of the grants of the crown shall pay double the amount of the annual contribution which has hitherto been imposed on them. The payment and delivery thereof shall be made in the manner aforesaid.—XVI.

All the proprietors of houses situated in Lisbon and in the district belonging thereto, shall contribute one moiety of the annual rent for which they have let, in case of their being let; and should the proprietors inhabit the said houses themselves, one moiety of the rent, to be determined by valuation. Payment and delivery thereof shall be made in the manner above-mentioned, and under the same penalties. All proprietors of houses situated in other towns and boroughs of the kingdom are liable to the same contribution, payable in the same form, and under the same penalties.—XVII. All proprietors of land, shall pay this year, double the amount of the tithes imposed on them.—XVIII. For all horses, mules, and servants, double the tax shall this year be paid which was laid on them by former regulations, and the amount of the said tax so doubled shall be paid at once.—XIX. All public buildings and establishments, which contribute towards the expenditure of the police, shall this year pay under the said contribution a sum equal to the amount thereof.—XX. The Sheriff shall, under the direction of the Senate, make a proportional reduction of the contribution, on all the companies of mechanics and tradesmen, whether they keep open shops in public places or elsewhere, levying the sum assessed by prompt execution, applying them to the purpose intended, and giving proper receipts to those who have paid their quota of the contribution. The Senate will cause the total amount thereof to be delivered into the chest of the Receiver General of the contributions and the public revenue of Portugal, every eight days until it shall be entirely discharged.—XXI. The Senate of the city of Oporto will cause the amount of the contribution to be levied in the same manner in the city of Oporto and in the district belonging thereto. And the said senate is further charged to compel all magistrates of all other places in the north to do the same, the northern provinces being in this case only subjected to the said senate.—XXII. The board of public welfare is to make, under the inspection of the Royal Exchequer, a similar requisition on such ships as shall be found without the jurisdiction of the senate, observing in point of payment and delivery the forms and penalties above-mentioned.—XXIII. The General in chief being desirous to indemnify the unfortunate inhabitants of Beira for what they have suffered from the march of the army through that province, orders, that the boroughs and villages situated between the Tejo and the road of Satraterra, &c. shall be exempted from the payment of the two first thirds of the present contribution, and from the provisions contained in the 21st article. The boroughs and villages situated on the road to Lisbon, shall enjoy the same exemption. Lands belonging to knights commanders, to holders of grants of the crown, and to other persons, pointed out in the 7th article, shall not be included in the disposition of the present article.—XXIV. The Secretary of State of the interior and of the Finances, is charged with the execution of the present Decree, which shall be printed and posted throughout the whole kingdom.

AUSTRIA.—*Declaration of the Emperor of Austria against England: dated Vienna, February 18th,* 1808.

During the war which was concluded by the peace of Tilsit, his imperial royal and apostolic majesty has continually endeavoured to impress the belligerent powers with the motives which ought to induce them to concur in endeavouring to insure a general peace. The court of Vienna from that time declared its sentiments to the Cabinet of St. James's, and the imperial envoy at London, Prince Stahremberg, received formal and pressing instructions. But as the British ministry, in an answer to these written communications declared that its answer must depend on its allies, the salutary propositions of Austria could not but be considered as disregarded, and soon after the treaty of Tilsit was concluded, by which the interests of the continent were regulated, without the participation of Great Britain. His imperial royal and apostolic majesty continued, nevertheless, convinced of the utility, and even of the necessity, of a general pacification; and this conviction afforded him new motives for renewing his pressing representations to the court of London.—in July, soon after the signing of the peace, the Prince of Stahremberg again received orders to induce the British ministry to enter into a negociation with France, in order that the continental peace might be connected with and confirmed by, a maritime peace; but these propositions were not more successful than the former had been, and the answer of England was evasive.—His majesty, however, thought it right to return to a subject of the most material influence on the general system of Europe, as well as the prosperity of the Austrian provinces in particular. Prince

Stahremberg was, therefore, for the third time, directed, in September, 1807, to make some farther overtures, connected with the former measures of the court of Vienna. But before his majesty's ambassador reported the result of his communication, the Court of London declared its sentiments, with regard to a maritime peace, in so positive a manner, refusing, at the same time, the mediation of Russia, making an attack on Copenhagen, and seizing the Danish fleet, without assigning any satisfactory cause of these violent measures, nay endeavouring to justify those proceedings, their infringements of the unquestionable rights of neutral powers, by official declarations, which so evidently clashed with the principles adopted by other great powers, that it was impossible not to perceive in the course pursued by the British minister, a disposition to remove the possibility of peace to a greater distance, and not to listen to whatever had any tendency to restore the tranquillity of Europe.—The impression which this conduct, destructive of all the hopes which his Majesty had fondly conceived, made on him, was as deep as it was painful Without waiting for the farther reports of Prince Stahremberg, orders still more urgent and more positive were sent him, than he had before received. These instructions, bearing date the 30th October, contained, 1st, a recapitulation of all former transactions, and directed him to represent to the Cabinet of St. James's, in the strongest colours, the unavoidable consequences of its conduct, and to insist, in the most earnest manner, on an open declaration of its real sentiments, with regard to peace, and to avail himself of all possible means to lead it both to sentiments of moderation, fitted for the present situation, and meeting the wishes of Europe.—The dispatches closed with the precise orders—"to apply once more on this subject in an official manner to his Britannic Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs, and to make to him the formal proposal to enter into negociations for a maritime peace, on such principles as answered the interests of all the powers concerned, and as a provisional proof of his pacific disposition, to desist from the measures pursued against Denmark, and retract the declaration which accompanied them. Should the Court of St. James's reject these proposals, or purposely protract giving any answer, Prince Stahremberg was directed to demand his passports and leave London with every person belonging to the embassy.—It was the Emperor's will that the above instructions should be restricted to such points of general interest, as were most likely to move the British cabinet to receive his proposals with attention and kindness; and if his Imperial Majesty ordered no complaints to be inserted of the numerous violations of his right, as a neutral power, violations, with regard to which his Majesty had not been able to obtain the least redress or compensation, the reasons, no doubt, will be obvious, which induced his Majesty to pass by in silence whatever concerned his personal interest.—His Imperial Majesty's ambassador in London could but execute the positive orders, which he received from Vienna, to their full extent. But being of opinion that he might yet indulge an hope of being able to prevail on the English ministry to shew more pacific sentiments towards France, he resolved to express, at first, part only of his orders in a note, which he addressed to Mr. Canning on the 20th November. The Secretary of State answered that note by a mere repetition of the declaration made to Austria since the month of April, 1807.—As all further representations were now evidently ineffectual, a final notification was sent on the 22d December to Prince Stahremberg, which repeated the order of the 30th October, and directed him, before his departure, to give in a note explaining circumstantially the motives of the Court of Vienna towards that of London. These dispatches, however, did not arrive in London till Prince Stahremberg had applied for, and received, his passes, and he no longer could have communication with the Secretary of State, and deliver in the note which had been transmitted to him.—This representation, which is confined to the official communications that have passed between the two governments, is sufficient to shew that the Cabinet of St. James's cannot mistake the causes, nor the motives which have induced his Apostolic Majesty to break off the connection, which has hitherto existed between Austria and Great Britain.—The Emperor, nevertheless, wishes to see the moment arrive, when the Court of London, sensible of its true interests, shall, with calmness and justice, judge of, and compare, the situation of England, with that of the other powers, and thereby enable his Majesty to renew with it his former friendly connections.

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